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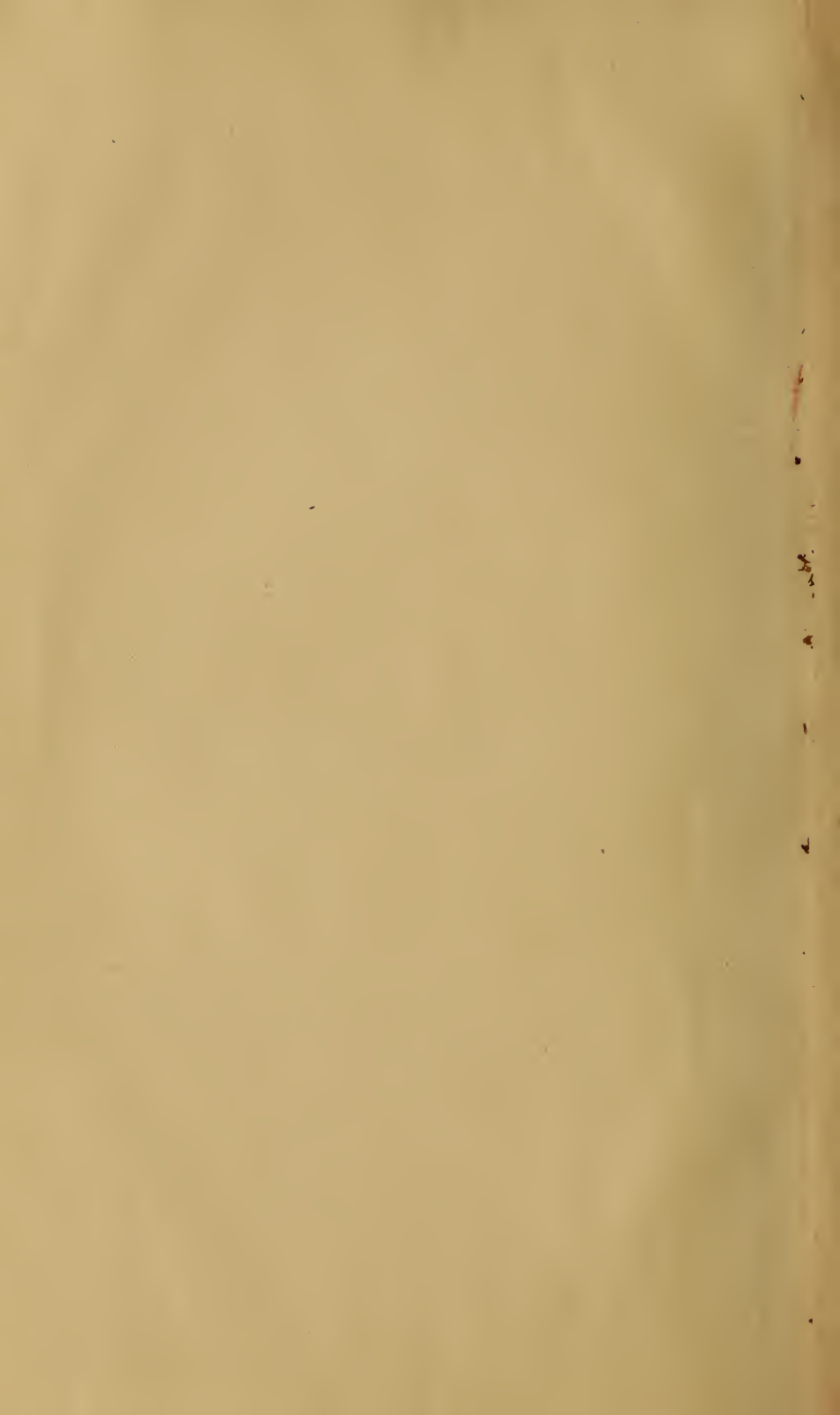
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CRANKS' RETREAT

A COMEDY-DRAMA

IN FOUR ACTS.

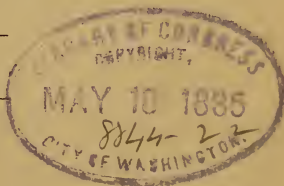
BY

A PARLETT LLOYD.

Author of "Drifting Alone," etc., etc.

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CHARACTERS.

HENRY DARRELL, founder and proprietor of Cranks' Retreat.
JUNIOUS BRUTUS EDWIN FORREST MACREADY, an actor, }
SUSAN B. FRANCHISE, a masculine-feminine, } Cranks.
PATRICK KILLPATRICK, a Fenian subject, }
MALAKOFF CZARWINSKI, A Nihilist, }
OSCAR, the poet, }
TOM, an unbleached American.
PAUL SHARPE, "ready for anything."
ERNEST SUTHERLAND, a private detective.
DONALD MORTON, a lawyer.
THE MANAGER OF PRINCE'S THEATRE.
DETECTIVE SLY.
MRS. HENRY DARRELL, the shadow of her husband.
JUDGE, }
CRIER, } Officers of the Court.
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY, }
ZAIDEE, the sunshine of Crank's Retreat.
Cranks, Policemen, Actors, etc.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENERY.

ACT I. Cranks' Retreat. "You are a murderer."
ACT II. Greenroom of Prince's Theatre, Liverpool. A life for a life.
ACT III. A cell in the "Old Bailey." "A lawyer is not needed." The Courtroom. "I am guilty."
ACT IV. Garden of Donald Morton. Darrell's Escape. Zaidee's love.

CRANKS' RETREAT.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Interior of "Crank's Retreat." Card boards hanging on walls with these inscriptions: "Dynamite is King," "Death to Tyrants," "Ireland Shall Be Free," "Viva le Republic," etc. Table already set near centre of stage. Tom discovered ringing bell as curtain rises.*

Tom. Dis am de last day fo' dis coon here, and don't you disremember it. I wasn't born to wait on cranks, and I might as well come to an understanding wid de boss at once. What's de use ob ringing dis yar bell, it only makes my poor ears feel like dey had drum corps in dem, and dem lunies don't pay any mo' 'tention den if I was calling 'em to settle at de captain's office. Sometimes dey scare me so dat I almost turn white, 'deed I do. I's afeerd o' my life, an' by golly! if I eber gets out o' dis place I'll start fo' Kalamazoo-zoo half an hour befo' immediately. Ah, here comes Mr. Killpatrick, the bloodthirsty Irish agitator. Glory, he looks kinder wild. [*Enter Killpatrick.*]

Killpatrick. Helloh, nager, stoupe your racket, I'm not deaf and dumb, do you hear? Ah, yer black spalpeen, I'll have yer life. I'm a bad mun from the Castle Demicaricarikee, an' thirsty for gore.

Tom. Dats' so, boss, dats so, but you wants red blood, you don't want nigger blood like mine.

Killpatrick. Faith, an' that's thrue. I must have red blood or none at all, at all. I want English blood. Do you hear, nager, English blood. Oh, but I hate England; for eight long weary years I laid like a piece of dead meat in the prison of—

Tom. Boss, you done told me dat forty-nine times befo'

Killpatrick. Hold ye tongue, an' I will tell it to ye agin. But no. Vengeance is drawing near, in two weeks time the Prince of Wales goes to Balmoral castle, and then—

Tom. I don't care if he goes to petticoat castle too. I—

Killpatrick. Hush up. Don't care eh, don't care ; don't care when me soul has been a' sighing and a' sighing for this chance for years. Begorrah, Ireland shall be free. Where's Mister Darrell ?

Tom. De Lord knows, I don't. But look, here's Mr. Russia-man, Zar-go, boss dat name'll gib me de lockjaw yet. [*Enter Czarwinski.*]

Killpatrick. By St. Patrick ye're the very mun I want to see. I now am proud to say that I need a couple of infernal machines.

Czarwinski. To dethrone some despot ?

Killpatrick. Don't know so much about that, but I be after pulverizing Balmoral Castle with the Prince in it.

Czarwinski. Ah, 'tis for the cause of freedom, then Czarwinski can be of service to you. Come, I will show you an eight day dynamical clock calculated to blow up the whole of England.

Tom. Gemmen, dinner's ready.

Killpatrick. Be quiet, nager. Mr. Czarwinski is your machine safe for those who use it ?

Czarwinski. Perfectly. 'Tis one beautiful piece of workmanship, on the Tomassen order, but greatly improved. The slightest fall will cause it to explode. Come, you shall behold it, you shall experiment with it.

Killpatrick. But dinner first, food and talk with Mr. Darrell will give me courage.

Czarwinski. Courage, and you need courage ? You are a coward.

Killpatrick. No, but, but, I tell you, honestly loike, though I hate England, I—I—kinder don't think dynamite justifiable, I—

Czarwinski. Bah, baby-brat ! dynamite is king ; dynamite is the weapon of the avenger, dynamite is the all-potent engine before which princes tremble. Faint-hearted child that you are, Darrell shall hear of this. [*Enter Sharpe.*]

Sharpe. Czarwinski is right. Man oftimes becomes inspired, but then man is a puny creature, he needs a mighty power placed in his hands to carry out his inspiration. Dynamite is that power. Some people should be removed from earth and transported immediately to another sphere. Dynamite will do it. There are,

to-day, vast buildings existing which are monumental insults to freedom. Dynamite will remove them. Misers and railroad magnets have heaped up enormous riches. Dynamite will distribute it among their heirs or their lawyers.

Czarwinski. Bravo, Mon. Sharpe, you are one great man. Dynamite is King. [*Enter Susan B. Franchise.*] A beautiful day, Miss Franchise.

Susan B. How dare you sir, how dare you call me Miss? You know I object to effeminate titles.

Czarwinski. True, true, I made a *miss*-take, Mr. Susan.

Susan B. That sounds better. But let me right here say a few words on the subject of woman suffrage. These papers [*unwrapping a huge bundle of them*] show that women are taking rapid strides towards the ballot-box. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that all men were created equal, is not woman an improvement upon man? Therefore, she is in every way qualified to vote, wear pants and smoke.

Killpatrick. But ma'am—

Susan B. Don't you dare interrupt me. At least let me open my mouth. Now, women have practised medicine and law, and have done all that men can do, and why should she be downtrodden by a parcel of brutes?

Czarwinski. I—

Susan B. Hush up. I tell you men are doomed, I say doomed. Once we get the right to vote, we will wear the breeches and you shall have a taste of petticoats and bustles.

Killpatrick. } Mercy ma'am.
Czarwinski. }

Susan B. There'll be no mercy for you. Men are condemned to suffer the tape and scissors of endless dressmakers, to have their hair bangled and frizzled, to use cosmetics and bandoline, to stay at home and mind squalling brats, to sew on buttons and wrestle with pots and kettles. I tell you men are doomed, doomed. [*Enter Oscar.*]

Oscar. Most true, and woman too,
For woman, lovely woman
Soon will feel our manly woes
To battle at a cannon's mouth
And wear a soldier's clothes,
To take the place of garbage men,

Or swing a blacksmith's ax,
 To man our ships, to scrub their decks,
 And sail to Halifax.

Now, Susan B., you soon will see
 'Tis true the world all over,
 For most men's life is toil and strife
 While women roll in clover.

Susan B. You're a fool. I'll—

Oscar. A fool I am, a fool I be,
 And yet I am too smart for thee.
 But by the by, sweet maiden tender
 Of masculine or female gender,
 Have you seen our Zaidee fair
 I thought I saw her enter here ?

Susan B. No, I haven't seen the little minx and don't want to, either. But to continue, there is not a question in all modern times more vital to our welfare than woman suffrage. I tell you, Mr. Czarwinski, if the Russian ladies had the right to vote there would be no need for either nihilism or dynamite.

Tom. [*Aside.*] De ole woman am right dis time, and don't you disremember it. Woman at de ballot-box would do mo' damage dan dynamite, any day. [*While Susan B. talks and gesticulates with Czar. and Killp., Tom busies himself about table, etc., enter Zaidee with waiter filled with dishes.*]

Zaidee. Geminy, I'm tired. Tain't much fun to be a roasting an' a boiling afore a red hot stove a' cooking for cranks. I was born for sumfing better nor that. I was born for a skating rink. Oh, cracky, if I could steal off sometime and get on them air rollers would'nt I show the boys something ! Let's see how'd they skate. You strut this way, then that way, then down you come, all for fifteen cents. But it may be a long time afore poor Zaidee gets a chance to show her flippers. Dad's so cross and Mam, Mam's worse nor the toothache. Nuffin but work for me * * * Lay there, you seven year old chicken. [*Slapping a dish on the table.*] Lay there you dried up old carrot you. [** * * * **] Ah, Mr. Butter, I'm stronger nor you, get in there and if you dare to break that dish I'll smack you. [*Half singing.*] Oh, there's a spoon for Daddy, there's a fork for the old woman, there's a knife for P. Sharpe and there's all the rest for Oscar. Dinner's ready, dinner's ready, folks. [*Enter auxiliary cranks, etc. All seat themselves at table.*]

Oscar. The frugal banquet waits us now,
 Let us test its tissue,
 For desert sweet Zaidee dear
 I would like to kiss you.

Zaidee. I'll box your jaws, you fool. But I say, Dad and Mam are out, lets all pitch in and have a good time.

Killpatrick. Be jabbers, that we will. Shall I warble—

Sharpe. No, for mercy's sake spare us.

Oscar. I propose a song from the sweetest of birds
 To be sweetly sung in my beautiful words.

All together. Yes, yes, Zaidee, a song, a song.

Zaidee. Folks, I ain't much on a' singing, 'cos I hasn't much l'arnin', howsumever, I'll do my best Mr. Oscar here composed the words on his cuffs, so I'll have to depend on him a' leading you in the chorus. I'm going to tell you about dynamite. [*All start to their feet.*] Be seated I hav'nt it about me. [*All the rest eat as she sings the following :*]

Oh, dynamite, dynamite, blow the old world up,
 The kings and the railroads own the whole earth,
 The despots are greedy,
 The poor men are seedy,
 While O'Donovan R. rolls over with mirth,
 England and Russia yell, "Heaven defend us,"
 And shake like they had the delirium tremendous.
 Oh, princes are quaking;
 And kingdoms are shaking,
 With fear of awakening, our King Dynamite.

Cho. 'Tis the terror of kings and friend of the devil,
 Reducing the tyrant to poor people's level.
 When a fiend we would fight
 For the sake of the right
 We've but to ignite, old King Dynamite.

Oh, dynamite, dynamite, fain would I use thee
 To blow up the fellow who keeps down below, [*Pointing.*]
 Who feeds led with a spoon,
 Hot as ulsters in June,
 And roasts all his guests in a fire you know.
 If a crank could get near him, 'tis easy to tell
 There'd be a warm rumpus raised down in — well,
 And sincerely we trust
 Satan'd get up and dust
 When he'd hear the loud bust, of King Dynamite.

Cho. Oh, we'll blow up the dudes and spare all the cranks,
 We'll kill all the "sissies," and gather the thanks,
 For the feminine gender
 Whose hearts are so tender
 Will find a defender, in King Dynamite.

[*Cranks all leave table towards end of song and crowd around Zaidee, keeping time and singing chorus very loud. N. B. Any other diversity might be here introduced. Enter Mr. and Mrs. Darrell as Zaidee finishes.*]

Darrell. Damnation! What's the meaning of all this clatter?

Mrs. D. Ah, its you, you good-for-nothing, worthless jade, [*striking at Zaidee.*] I'll teach you to be screaming and carrying on in this way. Oh, you little wretch, I'll half kill you, I'll— [*racing her around.*]

Darrell. That will do my dear. I'll punish her after dinner, not now. Leave her to me. [*Exit Zaidee.*] Be seated every one of you. [*Looks at table.*] No, never mind, you have eaten enough, begone!

Oscar. Most noble chief, most royal sire,
 To eat and drink's our great desire,
 After singing we are hungry quite,
 For scarce we ate a single bite.

Tom. Dat's so, boss. I's a witness. Cross my breaif, dey ain't hardly had nothing.

Darrell. Then they'll have to do without, 'twill teach them to presume upon my absence. Begone, every one; begone, I say. [*Exit auxilliary cranks.*]

Czarwinski. Czarwinski will not allow any man to speak thus to him. I must be addressed as a gentleman should be.

Darrell. Rebelling, eh. [*Aside to Czarwinski.*] Czarwinski seems to forget Moscow, the blowing up of the Winter Palace and the horrors of Siberia. All right, Mr. Czarwinski, I will be more polite when I speak to you in future, things are coming to a pretty pass, when Siberian exiles, dare to—

Czarwinski. Mercy, don't mention that—I—know I'm in your power, but—I—I—

Darrell. Begone, sir, begone, I will remember this. [*Exit Czarwinski.*]

Killpatrick. Sure an' Mister Darrell you're a foine gintleman, an' has to be sivere at toimes, but, but couldn't you send us off without hollowing so.

Darrell. Hush up, fool, I speak as I chose to English subjects.

Killpatrick. Don't, don't, for heaven's sake don't speak so loud, ye'll be overheard.

Darrell. Then out o' my sight. [*Exit Killpatrick.*] And why do you stand simpering there? you fool. [*Turning upon Oscar fiercely.*]

Oscar. I simper 'cos I smile,
To simper is my style.

Darrell. Idiot, begone!

Oscar. I can't begone, for I am here,
And if I begone, I'll be there.

Darrell. Get out. Vamboshe the ranch. One. two, three—bounce! [*Exit Oscar. Enter Zaidee.*]

Darrell. [*Turning fiercely upon Zaidee.*] Come here, you devilish brat; for two cents I'd thrash the skin off your back. How dare you sing? How dare you enjoy yourself? Haven't I told you about this before?

Zaidee. Yes, Dad, but I was only—

Darrell. Not a word out of you. Now, remember, if I ever catch you idle, or even talking with any of these inmates, I'll thrash you within an inch of your life. Do you hear?

Zaidee. Yes, Dad, but I wasn't doing nothing, 'deed I wasn't, I—I—

Darrell. Don't lie to me. I saw you. * * * Get to your work. If a very tall man should ring the bell and ask for me, show him right up. I have private business with him. * * * There, stop, tell Mr. Sharpe to come here at once. [*Exit Zaidee.*]

* * * I fear that girl will give us trouble yet. * * *
What a great power this Retreat is. The outside world thinks that I provide a home for these poor, half-witted creatures out of charity. Charity, the idea of me doing charity. Ha, ha. Charity and religion are often cloaks to cover up deeds of darkness. Now, here am I, known to the world as a benevolent old soul, taking care of a lot of insane paupers, when these paupers are the very source of all my wealth and power. Through them I can accom-

plish anything. I have correspondents all over the world, and when any of them want a dark deed done, from political threats to assassinations, I work upon one of these creatures until I have him nerved up to do the deed, then I have only to set him loose. In a little while I read that the work has been done, and yet my hands are still clean. Ha, ha, who can counteract the mighty influence a man holds over the world, when he has absolutely under his control a houseful of cranks?

Mrs. D. Oh, you're just a lovely man, and some of these days will be president of the first Irish Republic.

Darrell. No, no, my dear, my ambition does not lie in that direction. Public men of to-day are constantly in too much danger. No man of national reputation is safe; there are cranks everywhere, and if a shrewd man like me chuses he can prey upon their imaginations until they are as clay in his hands. But, by the by, have you made all ready for our expected guest.

Mrs. D. Yes, room No. 4 is vacant, he can have that. Is he violent?

Darrell. Only at times, but we must study his nature carefully. I intend that he shall assist Sharpe in—

Mrs. D. Hush, we might be overheard.

Darrell. No danger. Ah, here's Sharpe now. [*Enter Sharpe.*] Wife, you may retire. [*Exit Mrs. D.*] Sharpe, I have a very important mission for you.

Sharpe. I am ready for anything, sir.

Darrell. [*Looking carefully about to see if any danger of being overheard.*] 'Tis now the fifteenth of the month, on the twenty-fifth the Prince's Theatre, Liverpool, must be blown up. Do you understand?

Sharpe. Perfectly, but am I to do the work?

Darrell. No, there will be an half cracked actor here in a few minutes. It may be troublesome for us to sufficiently cloud his mind, and nerve him to the point, however, I think I am equal to the task. His love for the stage, and his jealousy of his rivals, shall be the tools I'll use. Besides, I have another means, you shall see what it is. I will call you in when he comes, and you must say yes to all the questions I ask you. Do you comprehend?

Sharpe. So far, all right.

Darrell. There is but little more. After we have him in proper state, I will give you all the money necessary for your expenses, and you can set sail at once. Remember, if you betray me in this matter the galleys await you.

Sharpe. You need not remind me of that. I will do as you say. But, the actor—

Darrell. Will be here in a few minutes. Please leave me to my own reflections. I will call you when I need you. [*Exit Sharpe.*] So far all works well. Let's see, [*taking out newspaper,*] yes, yes, the Premier has accepted the invitation, he will positively be there. Ha, ha. Now to write out a number of threatening editorials, and make the people believe I am tearing the very heart out of England. But suppose the Premier doesn't get blown up with the theatre, that something happens to keep him away. Ah, well, it doesn't make any difference to me. When the people hear of the calamity they will lift up their hands and say: "Darrell did it, Darrell did it," and that'll do me just as much good. My, won't the subscriptions to the Fenian fund come pouring in? But stop, suppose I kill a number of helpless women and children. Bah, that's nothing to me. I won't be near England. I won't hear their groans. It will have to be done, have to be done. I must keep up my reputation. It's bread and butter to me. [*Ring at bell.*] Ah, 'tis he, he comes at last. [*Enter Zaidee with a card in her hand.*]

Zaidee. Oh, Dad, I just wish you'd seen what handed me this. Why, Dad, its crazier than Oscar even. It looks like a fricassee dude plucked before 'twere ripe. "Young woman," it said, and it smiled till I thought its ears would fall into its mouth, "Young Miss, is me lord within his habitation?" I told it I didn't speak French, then it said: "Is Henry Darrell, E'squire reposing in this superb palatial domicile, or rather can he be found at this period of the solar day within the precincts of these clustering walls?" Oh, cracky, Dad, I had to laugh right in its face. "Yes," says I, with mighty big dignity, "Dad's up stairs." Then it took this ticket out of a pocket-book that big, [*showing by gesture,*] and told me to hand it to you with his best 'spects, but he didn't give them to me.

Darrell. What?

Zaidee. His best 'spects. [*Gesture, showing she means spectacles.*]

Darrell. Get out with you. You've too much tongue. Tell the gentleman to come in.

Zaidee. All right, Dad. [*Enter Macready.*] Helloh, here's crazy now. * * Why didn't you wait, and I'd sent a fool-catcher after you?

Darrell. [*Chasing her out.*] How dare you?

Zaidee. [*Peeping from behind the door.*] I say, Dad, let me put it in my scrap book. [*Exit Zaidee.*]

Macready. Most potent, grave and royal signor, you have sent for me and I have come. Wilt deign to speak to me?

Darrell. And your name is?

Macready. Junius Brutus Edwin Forrest Macready at your service.

Darrell. I am most happy to meet you. Be seated, sir. You are, I believe, an—

Macready. An actor. [*With strong accent on last syllable.*] One of those unreal creatures who fret out an imaginary existence upon a miniature world; who make men laugh while they themselves are suffering, perchance, bitter heart agonies; who make men weep while they themselves feel ready to laugh; who strut for a while and then make two exits, one from the unreal stage, and one from the great theatre—this world of ours. Yes sir, I, am an actor.

Darrell. No doubt a tragedian of the old school. I think I have seen you in your palmy days.

Macready. Yes—no—yes—by the ghost of Hamlet's father, it is—it ain't—it is— Ah, my scattered sense recall—

Darrell. What?

Macready. A fearful night in midwinter, a street-scene in London, the whistling wind, the pelting snow, a man passing under the light of a lamp. I am following him. My hand is raised, I strike with my clenched fist, some one pushes past me, the man utters a cry and falls dead at my feet. Ah, why, why does your face recall to my shattered mind that murder in the snow, that cry for help? Why does it make the image of that ghastly corpse rise before my conscience? Why, because you are—

Darrell. Henry Darrell, and no one else. Do not dare to call me any other name.

Macready. But scoundrel, you cannot deceive me. I know

you well, and will not be silent. My brain reels, yet vividly, I recollect—

Darrell. You recollect nothing. Fool, what good will it do you to rave about the past? Remember, you cannot prove me guilty. We were both found leaning over the corpse, both yelling for help. You swore that I committed the murder, and I swore that you did it. We were both arrested, and the testimony was as conclusive against the one as the other. A *non pros* was entered against both, and either of us is liable to be tried again at any time.

Macready. Yes, yes, but *you* know that I am innocent.

Darrell. I know nothing, beside the man is living who saw you strike the blow.

Macready. Monster, you lie! Though your hands are stained with blood, I hurl defiance at you.

Darrell. Wait and you shall see. [*Rings bell. Enter Zaidee.*] Tell Mr. Sharpe to come here at once. [*Exit Zaidee.*] Now sir, I will confront you with a living witness.

Macready. Villain that you are. Though you have all the chicanery of lago, you cannot make me believe that there was anyone present but the murdered and the murderer. Why did he not come forward before?

Darrell. Because he left England before the trial and did not wish to be detained there. But here he is and will speak for himself. [*Enter Sharpe.*] Ah, Mr. Sharpe, pardon me for recalling an incident that is unpleasant to you, but, tell me, you were in London on the night of February 17th, 1872. Were you not?

Sharpe. Yes, sir.

Darrell. I believe you were a witness to a murder upon that night?

Sharpe. Yes, sir.

Darrell. You saw the assassin strike the fatal blow?

Sharpe. Yes, sir.

Darrell. You were looking from a window directly over the spot?

Sharpe. Yes, sir.

Darrell. And the murdered man's name was Lord Nordville, was it not?

Sharpe. Nordville—Nordville—yes, yes, that was the name.

Darrell. And if you saw the man who committed the crime you would recognize him?

Sharpe. Easily. I can never drive his murderous features from my memory, for I saw him so distinctly under the light of the street lamp.

Darrell. [*Pointing to Macready.*] Then gaze into that man's face. Tell me is this the man?

Sharpe. [*Looking at Macready scrutinizingly.*] Yes—yes—'tis the same, changed a little, aged a little, perhaps, but still 'tis the same. Ah, I can swear that man murdered Lord Nordville.

Macready. Perjured wretch, I'll make you swallow your foul lie. Take that. [*Springs at Sharpe but is overcome by S. and D.*] Alas, I'm too weak to cope with fiends! My poor mind is in a whirl. I—I— All right, Darrell, all right, I will keep silent as the tomb—but—but—you, scoundrel, [*turning on Sharpe,*] had better keep out of my sight. I will not be responsible for my acts.

Darrell. Leave us Mr. Sharpe. I think Mr. Macready will come to terms now. [*Exit Sharpe.*]

Macready. Terms. I make terms with you! Wretch, how dare you?

Darrell. Be calm, sir, be calm; you are embittered against me. It will be to your own interest to listen.

Macready. No doubt you are about to propose some villainous scheme.

Darrell. No. I will return good for evil. You are out of work, Macready?

Macready. Yes, and being out of work am out of pockets, out of sorts, and outrageously hungry.

Darrell. Exactly, and you need a friend.

Macready. But better money.

Darrell. Admitted. You need both. Now, do you desire an engagement?

Macready. An engagement—ye gods, an engagement! You ask a half-starved actor, who loves his profession more than life, if he wants an engagement. Do famishing fish desire water? Do drunkards want drink? Do ducks swim? Certainly. Then certainly do I jump at your proposal. Oh, Darrell, God bless you, if you secure me an engagement, whether it is to play Hamlet in a dime museum, or Uncle Tom to a nickel audience, I tell you before hand, I accept, I accept.

Darrell. Then, Macready, old boy, I'm going to make you awfully happy. What do you say to playing Mercutio at the Prince's Theatre, Liverpool?

Macready. Liverpool, Liverpool, how in the devil am I to get to Liverpool?

Darrell. I will advance you the money, you can repay it out of the first month's salary.

Macready. Darrell you are an angel, here on my knees I thank you. I am almost starving, and here you come, like a heavenly messenger, and proffer me a chance to get back again into the profession I love. And the salary is to be?

Darrell. Fifty dollars a week. But come, you must have something to eat. I will send my girl in, you can order what you please. Make yourself at home, you shall be my guest until you sail for Liverpool and fame.

Macready. I have not words to thank you.

Darrell. No need, [*Aside.*] I will be amply repaid in the end. Now to work until he becomes as wax in my hands. [*Exit.*]

Macready. [*Singing.*]

So let the wide world jog as it will,
I'll be gay and happy still,
Gay and happy, gay and happy,
I'll be gay and happy still.

Well, this is the jolliest stroke of luck yet. Just to think, fifty dollars a week, and to play Mercutio, Mercutio, oh, Mercutio! Won't I make the modern actors fret and fume with jealousy, when the house thunders with applause at the great death scene. Ah, Shakespeare surpassed himself when he tried to draw the character of Mercutio the merry fellow, and for that reason he kills him off in the third act. Right well I remember his last lines. Tybalt has stabbed him. Mercutio reels and gasps: "I am hurt.

A plague o' both the houses! I am sped.

Is he gone, and hath nothing?"

Then Benvolio inquires—

"What, art thou hurt?"

Mer. "Ay, ay, a scratch; marry, 'tis enough.

Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon."

Romeo. "Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much."

Mer. "No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door; but, 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Romeo, thou hast been wont to call me a merry fellow. Ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a *grave* man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your house! Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat,

to scratch a man to death; a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why, the devil, came you between us? I was hurt under your arm."

Romeo. "I thought all for the best."

Mer. "Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worm's meat of me.
I have it, and soundly too: Your houses!

[*Enter Zaidee as he finishes.*]

Zaidee. Say, old man, you got 'em bad!

Macready. Come hither, child, come hither.

Zaidee. Nixey, scare-crow, nixey, I'm afeerd o' you.

Macready. Fear me not, little one; I may seem strange to your poor, finite mind, but I'm all right here. [*Pointing to his heart.*] Though my exterior be rough my interior is as smooth and placid as rippling brooklets flowing over nuggets of silver. Yes, yes, while my mind is decidedly eccentric, my heart is warm and generous.

Zaidee. Old man, I believe you. There's my hand on it. But, own up, you do look kinder crazy, now don't you? 'Fess?

Macready. Judging from a worldly standpoint, perchance I do, but Seneca tells us "there is no genius free from some tincture of madness."

Zaidee. Then you must have taken lots of the tincture.

Macready. Yes, I—I am a genius, as Horace says:

"Underneath this rough, uncouth disguise
A genius of extensive knowledge lies."

Zaidee. Give us a rest on that. Dad sent me up here to ax you what you want to eat.

Macready. [*Surprised.*] Who sent you?

Zaidee. Why, Dad, of course.

Macready. Do you mean Henry Darrell?

Zaidee. Yes, certainly, I do, he's my Dad, and Mam, she's my Mam.

Macready. Little girl, how old are you?

Zaidee. What's that to you? It's none of your business, sir!

Macready. I must know. Do you hear, its important!

Zaidee. Do you want to know my really age, or the age I generally cod folks with?

Macready. Your real age, of course.

Zaidee. Don't know 'zactly, but think about seventeen.

Macready. Just as I thought. Then, child, Henry Darrell is not your father.

Zaidee. You're a fool. Guess I ought to know my own father. After awhile you'll be telling me, that you're my grandmother's aunt? You can't stuff me, Mr. Luny.

Macready. But listen, child. Seventeen years ago, Henry Darrell and I were boon companions. I knew him then by another name. We were always together, and I know he never had any children. Why, he was not married until 1875.

Zaidee. 1875? Let's see, [*counting on fingers,*] one, two, three, four, seven, nine, ten years ago. Yes, that was the year I first saw Mam.

Macready. Exactly. After he married her he brought her home and passed her off to you as your mother. Come, tell me, little one, do you feel towards this man you call "Pap," and this woman you call "Mam," that degree of immeasurable affection which is born in every child for its parents?

Zaidee. I don't know what you mean. In course I love Mam. I—

Macready. But hush! Do you love her so that her very name awakens the sleeping harp within your heart, and makes it chant sweet anthems of a child's devotion? Do you feel for her a boundless love which time can never tame? Answer me. Do you have a gentle, delightful, greatful, can't-be-described emotion when you think of her?

Zaidee. Look here, Mr. Man, if you're going to have one o' your spells, I'll git.

Macready. Fear me not. Can you not recall something of the days of your babyhood? Listen, did you ever hear a sweet little song, which sounds something like this: [*Singing soft and low.*]

"Slumber and dream in the morning of life,
 Dream of the pathway before thee,
 Let not each hour with sorrow be rife,
 Happiness, too hovers o'er thee—
 Life thus is checkered with sunshine and sorrow,
 Dark may the day be, but brighter the morrow,
 Then never be impatient," etc.

[*Mendelssohn's cradle song.*]

Zaidee. Yes, yes, oh yes! Oh, it all seems like a most delightful dream. While you were singing, I pictured to myself a

wee little girl kneeling before a trundle bed repeating an evening prayer ; her beautiful mother leaning over her, stoops down and kisses her ; the little girl hops into bed, and the mother sings her to sleep with that beautiful song. How strange, how sweet, how—

Macready. Yes, yes, but keep the picture before your mind. Do you not recognize that mothers' face. Look—

Zaidee. No—no tain't Mam. Mam never thought of singing to me. The lady in my dream is so lovely, so—I 'speck she's an angel.

Macready. You are right, my child, she is an angel now ; but—but—then—then she was your mother.

Zaidee. Oh, don't—don't say that, you'll make me cry. Oh, if Mam only was like that, how I'd love her. Geminy I'd wan't to kiss and hug her all the time ! No, Mister, it's well enough for poor Zaidee to dream about such nice things, but in real life there is nothing for her but abuse. Oh, sir, Mam never speaks a kind word to me, and if I had as many dollars as she gives me blows I'd be awfully rich. See my arm, [*laying bare her arm,*] see there, that great big bruise, Mam gave me that.

Macready. The cruel wretch ! [*Looking at her arm intently.*] But, Zaidee, what's this—this peculiar red mark ?

Zaidee. You mean that little thing? Why that's always been there.

Macready. [*Aside.*] No doubt it is a birth mark. I'll remember that : Strawberry mark on right arm above the elbow. [*Aloud.*] Now go, little girl, get me something to eat, and quickly too. Let's see, what will I have ? Well, since I've struck luck, I must have a meal fit for the gods. Go, order me tripe, yes, fried tripe and onions—boiled ; five eggs, some beans—Boston baked, mind you, some cheese, child, Limburger cheese—good and strong, and let me wind up with plum pudding.

Zaidee. Golly, it'll take some time to prepare that, but, I'll give the order all the samee'. Tripe, onions, eggs, beans, cheese and pudding. I'll make no mistake. [*Exit Zaidee.*]

Macready. There's not the slightest doubt in my mind but that she's Lord Nordville's child. Poor fellow, the mere mention of his name sends cold creeps through me. How often have I been welcomed into his household, and what a happy home that was, too ! How he loved his bright eyed baby daughter ! When I'd go there, I used to find him with her upon his knee playing like

children together. What a lovely lady his wife was, so sweet and so unpretending. She never hesitated to receive me as though I were the most titled nabob in the land instead of an humble actor. And yet I quarrelled with such a man; angered by an imaginary insult and excited by drink, I struck him as I would a cur. My head is dazed when I think of it. Ah, Darrell spoke truly, 'twas under the street lamp that I rushed at him. But, before God, I only struck him with my fist! Some one pushed past me. I heard an oath, and then I cried for help, for suddenly I realized that I was kneeling over a corpse. A man was beside me, a man I had always known and trusted as my friend, and that man was he who now calls himself Henry Darrell. He looked the fiend incarnate. I accused him of murdering Lord Nordville and he accused me. I know that I am innocent, but stop, I was drunk! I was for the time being insane! Oh heavens, suppose I did have something in my hand, suppose I did kill him! The thought is driving me mad. If I am a murderer the law shall have my life. "A life for a life." I will not live with the blood of such a man crying out against me. Once in England I will give myself up. But—but *his* child here, here in Darrell's house. What can it,—what does it mean? [*Enter Sutherland.*]

Sutherland. I beg your pardon, but is your name Macready?

Macready. I have the honor of being known by that name.

Sutherland. I came all the way from England to find you.

Macready. Indeed. No doubt then you are connected with the Prince's Theatre, Liverpool?

Sutherland. You are mistaken, sir. [*Watching Macready very intently.*] My business with you is so very pressing that I followed you here.

Macready. Well. What for?

Sutherland. Simply to show you this knife. [*Handing him a rusty looking knife.*]

Macready. [*Grabbing it,*] Heavens, man, where did you find this?

Sutherland. Never mind that for the present. So you recognize the knife. I did not think you would fail to do so, as your name is engraved upon the handle! Do you notice those stains upon the blade?

Macready. Yes, yes, speak out man, what are they?

Sutherland. They are blood, Lord Nordville's blood. Did you know Lord Nordville?

Macready. I—I—yes—I knew him well, and loved him, too.

Sutherland. No doubt. [*Aside.*] The same species of love that Cain had for Abel. [*Aloud.*] But did you not have a quarrel with him on the night of February 17, 1872, the evening he was murdered?

Macready. Yes, yes, but 'twas only a little dispute, only a little—

Sutherland. Yet your little dispute angered you enough to make you follow him.

Macready. How do you know that?

Sutherland. I guessed it. But, hold on, you did more, you struck at him with that knife in your hand,—in other words you deliberately murdered him.

Macready. You lie. I—

Sutherland. Wait, I can prove all I say. This knife was found in an alley-way near the spot. You were caught bending over the corpse, and, hold on, as you crossed Fleet street, while following him, you were heard to mutter: "Nordville, it is your life or mine."

Macready. Mercy, man, mercy! You are driving me mad.

Sutherland. My mission is not to arrest the murderer, for that would be useless, a man cannot be tried twice for the same offense, but to discover, if possible, whether Lord Nordville's daughter, who disappeared on the night of the murder, is still living.

Macready. Do you mean to tell me that his child was stolen?

Sutherland. Double-faced scoundrel! You know that as well as I do. Come now, own up, where is she? What did you do with her?

Macready. I—I didn't—

Sutherland. It's no use trying to play that game on me. Speak out, man. Have you killed her? No? Then, for Heaven's sake, tell me where she is! You can't fool me by some impostor, for I have here a memorandum of a peculiar birth mark which will identify her beyond all doubt. [*Enter Zaidee with dishes.*]

Macready. Yes, yes a strawberry mark on the right arm above the elbow.

Zaidee. [*Aside.*] They must be talking about me.

Sutherland. Just as I thought. I'm on the right track, and Lord Nordville's daughter is—

Macready. [*Pointing to Zaidee.*] Standing right there. [*Sutherland rushes at Zaidee and grabs her by arm, trying to look.*]

Zaidee. Don't you dare touch me, I'll yell for Dad.

Macready. Don't please don't, there's a nice young lady. Just show this gentleman your arm to oblige me, he won't hurt you.

Zaidee. [*Shows arm.*] All right then, if that'll do you any good. Cracky, after awhile my arm will become more of a curiosity than the tattooed lady's down at the "ten cent dime."

Sutherland. [*Examining arm and comparing it with description in note book.*] By George, I'm in luck! There can be no doubt of it. This is the heiress of Lord Nordville.

Zaidee. Look a' here, young man, if Dad comes in and catches you a' standing there a' feeling my arm he'll make things awful hot for you.

Sutherland. [*To Macready.*] "Dad," who in the devil does she mean by "Dad?"

Macready. [*Aside to Sutherland.*] She refers to Darrell, the man who owns this place. It must have been he who stole her. He has taught her to believe that he's her father. You must deal cautiously with him, and not let him know that you are on her track. What do you propose to do?

Sutherland. [*To Macready.*] I must get her to England someway or other. Will Darrell consent?

Macready. [*To Sutherland.*] Never, but give me your card, [*Sutherland hands him card.*] and I think I can manage to have her at your office by to-morrow, ready and willing to go any where.

Sutherland. Something seems to tell me that I can trust you, but beware trying to deceive me. [*Exit Sutherland.*]

Zaidee. Say, cully, what're you an' that air slick looking chap a' talking about, anyway?

Macready. Oh, nothing, that is, nothing particular. You know he's a—a— [*Aside.*] Dang it, what is he? [*Aloud.*] He's a, oh yes, a theatrical manager.

Zaidee. [*Rushing to door and calling loudly.*] I say, you,

come back here, come back here, I say. I'll fetch him. [*Starts to go.*]

Macready. [*Stopping her.*] Why, what in the world's the matter ?

Zaidee. [*Half crying.*] I hate you ! Now he's gone, he's gone, and I didn't say anything to him. You're a nasty, horrid thing for stopping me.

Macready. But why, child, are you so anxious ?

Zaidee. You crazy goose. Why ? Why, 'cos he's a manager. I'm just dying to talk to a real real live manager. Oh, Mr. Macready if you only knew how I love anything or anybody who has something to do with the stage * * Oh, say, you're an actor. Ain't it awful nice ?

Macready. [*Aside.*] Here's luck, maybe she's stage struck. [*Aloud.*] Oh, it is a charming life. [*Aside.*] Heaven forgive me. [*Aloud.*] Just to think we play night after night, amid thunders of applause ; we feel, we know that every ear in our vast audiences is strained to catch each word we utter. We are heroes, courted and adored by an admiring and appreciative public. Yes, yes it is a fine thing to be an actor.

Zaidee. Oh, how I would love to go on the stage !

Macready. You would ! Then you are just the little girl Mr. Sutherland is looking for, only—

Zaidee. Only, what ?

Macready. You would have to go to England, his theatre is over there.

Zaidee. Why, I'd go anywhere. Just think, would'nt I make a stunner ? I'd just set the boys crazy.

Macready. Indeed you would, and in a few years you'd be at the head of the profession. [*Aside.*] Commencing backward.

Zaidee. Do you really, really think so, and will you see the gentleman for me ? Oh, please promise me to !

Macready. But how about Mr. Darrell ?

Zaidee. Oh, you mean old Dad. I don't care that for him. [*Snapping her fingers.*] If you think the manager will take me, I'll play hookey to-night, and no one will be the wiser.

Macready. Do you really mean it ?

Zaidee. In course I do. Ain't I been a' sighing and a' sighing for this opportunity all my born days ? What ! is that his card you have in your hand ? [*Grabbing it.*] Goodbye, old lunny, I'm going to see the manager, goobye. My, won't Dad

and Mam rare and pitch, but I don't care, I'll soon be an actress. Tra-la-la- la. [*Exit Zaidee.*]

Macready. Well, here's a go. Immortal Shakespeare, who'd have thought that the little one would have done precisely as I wanted her to do without so much as a suggestion ! I wonder how all this will end ? Ah, here come Darrell and his tribe. [*Enter Mr. and Mrs. Darrell, and all the cranks.*]

Darrell. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you Mr. Junius Brutus Edwin Forrest Macready, an actor of wonderful ability, and who is destined to be the leading light of the Prince's Theatre, Liverpool. I want you all to welcome him into our Retreat. Before he is initiated into our order and I administer to him the ironclad oath of secrecy, I would like you all to state our object in life.

All together. Death to tyrants !

Darrell. Exactly. Let me say that the profession he adorns is one of the noblest in the world and nothing would make me prouder or happier than to have my own child, be it a son or a daughter, upon the stage. For it is the great centre of genius and talent. But, by the way, where is Zaidee, the little wretch, she's always around ? Have any of you seen her ?

All together. No, no.

Macready. I have.

Darrell. Then where in the deuce is she ?

Macready. Your ambition, sir, has been fulfilled, she has gone to be an actress.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Greenroom of Prince's Theatre, Liverpool. Stage well cleared. Wings open to left. A safe right of stage.*

[ENTER MACREADY AND SHARPE.]

Sharpe. Here we are at last, and a charming theatre 'tis, too.

Macready. Ye gods, my ambition hath sighed for just such a place. Ah, Sharpe, I will bless you all the days of my life.

Sharpe. Tut, tut, I am only doing Darrell's bidding, save your gratitude for him.

Macready. Noble fellow, I will never be able to do enough to repay him. But come, now that we have become friends and understand each other thoroughly, I want to ask you a very serious question, and I desire a frank, and honest answer ; tell me where you in earnest when you acknowledged, before Darrell, that you saw me murder Lord Nordville ? Speak out, man, speak out !

Sharpe. I—I—that is—

Macready. In heaven's name, do not hesitate. Oh, say that it was not so, that you said it for some reason known only to yourself and Darrell, and that it was not true.

Sharpe. But, I—I cannot say that. For my sake, Macready, do not revert to that fearful night, it will make me hate you.

Macready. Why ?

Sharpe. Because I shrink from you with horror when I think of it. Would that I could drive the terrible memory from my mind, for you—you are a murderer !

Macready. Then it is true, 'twas I who struck the fatal blow. Merciful heavens you will drive me mad ! I, a murderer and yet free ! Surely justice is dead when such a wretch as I, is allowed to go unpunished. Look you here, Paul Sharpe, my life belongs to the law, I will give myself up, and expiate my crime upon the—

Sharpe. Upon the gallows.

Macready. Yes, let a felon have a felon's death. Oh, to think that in a fit of drunken frenzy I should kill my best friend ! There, there, look ! I see his ghastly corpse staring me in the face, his blood cries aloud for vengeance. Ten thousand demons seem crying : " begone, murderer, begone."

Sharpe. Calm yourself, Macready, calm yourself, remember we came here to make professional arrangements.

Macready. Calm, how dare you tell me to be calm, calm ? when my hands have been steeped in the blood of my own friend ! Bah, I will not be calm until I stand at the bar of justice a convicted felon, until the judge pronounces the sentence of death so justly merited, until I hear the prison bolts clink behind me ; no, not even then, or when I stand upon the gallows before a gaping, mocking crowd, and the executioner springs the trap from under me, after that maybe, maybe in eternity I will find peace. No, no, not even then—

Sharpe. [*Aside.*] Darn it, I didn't expect him to go on that way. I must do something to quiet him. [*Aloud.*] I say, Macready, bear up, be brave, play Mercutio to night, and after that then, then give yourself up, if you are fool enough to do so. It will be a greater sacrifice for you to leap from fame into a prison cell, but I feel sure that you are equal to the ordeal.

Macready. You are right, always right, I will accept this engagement. You say the Premier of Great Britain is to be here to-night ?

Sharpe. Yes, he is expected.

Macready. I will do my best, do you hear, my best ! This old theatre shall fairly ring, there shall not be a dry eye in the house when I come to the death scene. For I will have the grim monster ever before me.

Sharpe. Bravo, old boy, bravo !

Macready. 'Tis truly a golden opportunity, I shall achieve the object of my ambition, and at the same time give life for life. Ah, the greater man becomes in this world of ours the greater is his fall when death comes and levels him as low as the humblest pauper. Sharpe, you will be in the audience to-night ?

Sharpe. Yes, oh yes. [*Aside.*] In a horn.

Macready. Then you will see what remorse can do. You will see me sink from the highest pinnacle of fame to the lowest depth of misery and dejection ; you will see—

Sharpe. Yes, but Macready, you know these managers are queer chaps, suppose he should want to favor somebody else and try to back out from the engagement he made with Darrell ?

Macready. But Darrell assured me it was all settled. Great goodness, man, you don't mean to say there's a doubt about it !

Sharpe. No, but, you know, you were not here at the rehearsal this morning.

Macready. That was because you stopped me from coming.

Sharpe. True enough, I didn't think 'twas necessary. The manager, however, might think otherwise and have engaged somebody else.

Macready. Zounds, if he has done that I'll soon make him understand that I am no child to be played with.

Sharpe. And if he has the face to deliberately deny that he had engaged you, what would you do ?

Macready. The miserable wretch, why I don't know, I'd feel tempted to, to—

Sharpe. Don't make too rash a threat, you know you'd be afraid to—

Macready. Afraid, me afraid !

Sharpe. Yes, you'd say : "Beg your pardon Mr. Manager, its all a mistake, I'm awfully sorry."

Macready. Don't enrage me too much, or I'll show you the kind of a man I am. If I should be disappointed to-night I will become desperate, and no one knows what my desperation might drive me to.

Sharpe. Bah, Macready, you may be hot tempered, but you are not quick enough. Do you know what I would do if I were you, and this manager would dare insult me ?

Macready. No. What ?

Sharpe. I'd blow his whole theatre up.

Macready. How ? What's that you say ?

Sharpe. Can it be possible you have not heard of the wonderful avenger, King Dynamite ?

Macready. Of course I've heard of it. Scientists and others say that it is terrible, and there is no limit to its power of destruction ?

Sharpe. Depends upon how much you use. A pint placed in one of Czarwinski's machines would not more than kill one man, but a quart would blow this whole building to atoms. Ah, dynamite is more subtle than poison, more certain than a pistol's ball, surer than a sword's thrust, swifter than a—

Macready. Enough ! This talk is folly. Let's change the subject. I feel sure the gentleman will be only too happy to wel-

come me. [*Enter call boy.*] Ah, here, call boy, take this card to the manager and tell him I await his coming. [*Exit call boy.*]

Sharpe. Have you never interested yourself in the subject of explosives?

Macready. Certainly, but it is only of late that dynamite has been employed for political vengeance.

Sharpe. True enough, but the idea is an old one. Recollect the Gunpowder Plot of Guy Fawkes early in the seventeenth century. The only difference is that dynamite is so much more powerful. Ah, if you were an Irishman you would know how the people of the Emerald Isle are downtrodden by the tyranny of England.

Macready. I am an Irishman, sir, by descent, and I would have you understand that I'm not in the least in sympathy with this government. The use of any weapon is justifiable by the oppressed people of either Ireland or Russia to free themselves from despotism.

Sharpe. Give me your hand on that. You're a man after my own heart. Ah, if I were fixed as you are now, caring nothing for my life, I wouldn't hesitate—I'd—I'd—

Macready. What would you do?

Sharpe. I'd blow up this whole shebang. Don't start but listen: The Premier, who is in reality the head of this tyrannical government, will be here to-night. He is a miserable pretentious nabob, and if someone would have the bravery to blow him up, that someone would become a martyr for the holy cause of Ireland; his name would blaze upon history's pages as a hero, and who knows might lead to the freedom of the land of shamrock. England is stronger than Ireland and for that reason to fight her successfully, the latter is compelled to resort to the most powerful weapons. 'Tis war to the death, and all's fair in war, you know. But here comes the manager, he's celebrated for toddying after royalty. For gracious sake don't let him know there is Irish blood in your veins it may prejudice him.

Macready. Bah, I am too proud to conceal it. [*Enter Manager.*]

Manager. [*Disdainfully.*] What is it you desire of me, my good fellows?

Macready. [*Aside.*] Witness Jupiter, he takes us for supes! [*Aloud.*] I sent you my card, sirrah.

Manager. But I fail to recall your name. Be good enough to state your business.

Sharpe. [*Aside to Macready.*] 'Tis just as I told you, he's going to make out he never engaged you, [*aside to audience,*] which is true. [*Aloud.*] My dear sir, Mr. Macready here, is the gentleman whom you engaged through Mr. Darrel in America to play Mercutio.

Macready. Yes, yes, I'm the man.

Manager. Darrell! America! I engaged a man to play Mercutio, why this is preposterous, I did nothing of the kind.

Macready. You lie, you did. Darrell said—

Manager. What do I care what Darrell, or anyone else said, I never even heard of such a man? You're a pair of impostors. I'll have you to understand that the Prince's Theatre does not employ half-rate actors at hap-hazard. Get out of this or I'll—

Macready. You'll what?

Manager. I'll have you put out. Such presumption is unheard of in England. Begone!

Macready. You are a cur and lack the first elements of manhood. We will leave your theatre, sirrah, but as sure as the stars shine you will hear from me again. Beware! you have wronged me and you shall pay dearly for this. I will either play Mercutio to-night, or—

Manager. [*Pointing to the door.*] Begone, or I'll call an officer. [*Exit Sharpe and Macready, the latter muttering as he leaves:* "I'll show the wretch what it costs to trifle with me."]

Manager. In all my managerial career I never saw the like of that before. The idea, an unknown man coming to me fifteen minutes before the curtain goes up upon an important night like this and insisting upon playing Mercutio. Ha, ha, this is too ridiculous for anything. * * Yet somehow or other I like that fellow, what's-his-name? [*looking at card,*] oh, yes, Junius Brutus Edwin Forrest, ha, ha, face ever so much, but I distrust the other. [*Taking out watch.*] Dear me, it's a quarter to eight and my little protege hasn't yet arrived. She's going to make a charming actress. How I wish I could have given her a more important part than the nurse. The idea of a mere child playing Juliet's nurse. Well, novelties are in demand now-a-days, and she certainly must be the youngest person who has ever

attempted it. There is no other character I could have cast her for. Some of these days she'll make a bewitching Juliet. What a pity her education has been so neglected. Everything must pass off smoothly to-night, my reputation and fortune are in the balance for the Premier will surely be here. There's one great consolation I certainly have the strongest cast that has ever attempted the play, and there ought to be an ovation. [*Enter Zaidee and Sutherland.*]

Zaidee. Oh, am I in time, Mr. Manager? Am I in time?

Manager. Yes, my child, just in time.

Zaidee. That's hunki-dori! Jolly, but I'm glad! Mr. Sutherland detained me, or I'd been here lots sooner. We had to run all the way. My, I'm out of breath!

Sutherland. You will have plenty of time to regain it. You do not go on until the third scene, I believe?

Zaidee. No, but then, little foolie, don't you know I've got to dress. Ah, I say, Mr. Manager, I just hate this part you've given me. The idea of 'specking me, a young girl, to play an old woman, an' nurse a big baby like Juliet. I guess she's twice as old as I am, leastways she looks it.

Manager. My child it could not be helped. Mr. Sutherland, who is my warmest friend, insisted that I should give you a trial, and this was the only chance. I admit it does not suit your tender years. Juliet would be just the thing.

Zaidee. You're a delightful old bald-headed flatterer and I'd just like to kiss you if you weren't so ugly. Look a'here, Mr. Sutherland, 'spose you were Romeo, wouldn't I make a daisy in the balcony scene, peeping over kinder cross-eyed at you? My heart takes a flip-flop when I think of it. But I'll have to let it flop, for here goes to get onto my togs. [*Exit Zaidee.*]

Manager. Sutherland you've found a prize in that girl, some of these days she'll be a leading star.

Sutherland. No doubt, if she remains in the profession, but do you know she's an heiress?

Manager. The deuce you say. And you didn't tell me. If I'd known that I'd have given her Juliet's lines and advertised her well.

Sutherland. No doubt you would, and for that reason I said nothing of it to you. She has fallen desperately in love with the stage and I am just as desperately in love with her. If I can only

disgust her with the profession maybe I'll have some chance for part of her affections. When I succeed in proving her identity I'll startle her by ushering her into her home of luxury.

Manager. Ah, then she does not know she is an heiress.

Sutherland. No—and I intend to break it to her gently.

Manager. But not until you have won her heart—ha! ha!

Sutherland. I'll not breathe a word of love to her until she knows exactly who she is and who I am.

Manager. No matter if she be an heiress, she'll have to have a huge pile to lay down dollar for dollar with you. The boys say £100,000 don't cover your wealth. But hello—listen—there's the orchestra playing. I say, call boy! [*goes to side and looks*] Packed, jammed, a splendid house, the Premier's among them [*Enter call boy*] Are all on time?

Call boy. All except Mr. Barnes.

Manager. Hasn't he come yet? I wonder what detains him? Here boy, run—run to his hotel—quick, and find out what's the matter. [*Exit call boy.*] Gracious goodness! [*Getting excited.*] If anything has happened what will I do! There's not a man in the company that can play the lines—except Barnley, and he's Romeo, and on at the same time. Excuse me, Sutherland, something will have to be done—there—there, up goes the curtain—good heavens! [*Exit Manager very much excited.*]

Sutherland. I wouldn't be a manager for all the money in the world. [*Great noise outside; voice:* "I tell you, gentlemen, this is the green room you can't come in." *Second voice:* "I tell you we must—we've got to see the manager." "But you shant"—"I shall," etc.] [*Enter Darrell, Kilpatrick, Franchise, Oscar and Czarwinski, auxiliary cranks in single file.*]

Darrell—[*turning his back to Sutherland*] Pardon me, sir, until I call the roll [*Calls*] Patrick Killpatrick—[*Killpatrick*] "here am I suh," Oscar Wilde—"here," Priscilla Sarsparilia—"present;" Malakoff Czarwinski—"here," etc. You see, sir, I'm of a charitable disposition. I take care of these poor creatures, providing for them a comfortable home—

Sutherland. Yes, I know all about your charity.

Darrell. By George, it's Ernest Sutherland! How came you here? I didn't recognize you, I am so surprised.

Sutherland. No doubt, but what are you doing in England?

Darrell. I might ask you the same question.

Sutherland. My home is here.

Darrell. Well, I came over because some one has stolen my daughter. I have tracked that some one here and I know where that some one is.

Sutherland. Glad of it—for you are the very man “that some one” wants to see. I notice you’ve brought your family.

Darrell. Yes, I didn’t think it safe to leave them in America, besides I’m going to start a Retreat in London. The crank business is played out in the States. Too much competition. [*Enter Manager tearing his hair with excitement.*]

Manager. Barnes has not come, has not come! What will we do! The first scene is half over. There Tybalt is fighting Benvolio. Oh, why don’t he come. I say you, fellow, [*to Darrell*] can’t you take Barnes’ place, for Heaven’s sake can’t you?

Darrell. I’m not an actor.

Manager. Then what in the devil are you doing here? [*Turning to cranks in turn.*] Can’t you, or you, or you? [*Rushing off.*] Heavens, I am ruined!

Darrell. Well, that’s about the craziest crank I’ve seen yet. I wonder if he wants to come to my retreat?

Sutherland. That’s not a crank, it’s the manager.

Oscar. Same thing—same thing.

Darrell. Hush up! The Manager, the deuce you say! then he can restore to me my daughter, my darling Zaidee. She is here.

Sutherland. Yes, Zaidee is here, but your daughter is not.

Darrell. What do you mean?

Sutherland. I mean the young lady whom you called your daughter was no more yours than mine, and that you stole her.

Darrell. How dare you. Is there anything more that you mean?

Sutherland. Nothing particular, only that I intend to restore her to her family.

Darrell. Bah, you cannot prove her identity.

Sutherland. I’ll see about that. But it’s useless for you to loiter here. Good day, sir; good-day. [*bowing him out.*]

Darrell. I’ll have you to understand that Henry Darrell

is no man to be trifled with. I will not leave this theatre till I have seen—[*Enter Zaidee dressed for nurse in Romeo and Juliet.*]

Zaidee. Your darling daughter.

Darrell. And who are you old woman?

Miss Franchise. One of us women suffragists I'll warrant.

Oscar. Fine specimen of an antique.

Killpatrick. Begorra! it looks like me poor ould mother.

Zaidee. [*Quoting from Nurse in R. and J.*] "Marry, farewell. I pray you sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his roguery?" [*Darrell, aside*: "Evidently off."]

Sutherland. "A gentleman, Nurse, that loves to hear himself talk; and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month."

Zaidee. [*Still quoting.*] "An 'a speak anything against me I'll take him down an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy Knave! I am none of his flirtgills; I am none of his skain-mates; and thou must stand by too and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?" [*Turning upon Darrell.*] Hold still, miscreant, until I strike thee!

Darrell. I'm in a lunatic asylum this time, sure. I'll stop in again Suther—

Zaidee. Don't go, Dad, don't go; and didn't yer know your young un?

Darrell. What, Zaidee, my child, my child! [*throwing his arms around her.*]

Zaidee. Yes, yours truly! Get onto my togs! You needn't look kinder shamed at me. I'm fly. 'Way up. Shebang! Wouldn't leave stage for twice the money to stay home. Oh Dad, please don't make me quit!

Darrell. But Zaidee, dear, your poor mother—

Zaidee. Oh Mam'll get along very well without me—leastwise, she always did. [*Turning to Oscar.*] Helloh—Horsecar, give us your flipper. Why, Miss Franchise, shake old woman, you look as much like a man as ever. And Patrick, begabers you're not as blood-thirsty as you used to be before O'Donovan was shot. An' Czarwinski here too—why this is jolly! [*Shakes hands with all.*] Let's have a song. I don't go on till next scene.

All together. Yes, yes, let's revive old times.

Miss Franchise. But before you begin let me just say a few words. I am disappointed that you are not a member of our Fe-

male-Masculine Society, which believes that women have an equal right with men to —

All together. Oh, give a rest! hush up! etc.

Franchise. I'll have my say or die in the attempt. What's more, you mustn't interrupt. The time for reform has come. Men must be suppressed, and the quicker we do it the better. If I had a husband, oh, if I only had a husband! wouldn't I make him walk-chalk-ginger-blue, though! I'd whip him three times a day, good or bad, out o' spite; and if he dared open his mouth I'd put my fist in it.

Oscar. Oh, thou rare and radiant maiden,
Thy lovely eyes are richly laden
With sparks of angry ire;
Pray, do not scold, oh, do not fret,
You may find a husband yet.

[*Aside.*] Oh, what a liar!

Franchise. [*Softly.*] And do you really think so, Oscar?

Oscar. Think so? No, I know so.

There are hundreds sighing,
And thousands crying.

[*Aside.*] And one a lying,

[*Aloud.*] For you, fair maid, for you.

Franchise. Oh, Oscar, you make me awfully happy! If I only had a dear little husband like—well, well, like you; dear, nice, little thing, I'd pet him, I'd love him, I'd almost smother him.

Zaidee. You make me sick.

Oscar. As we cannot tarry long,
Let us have a jolly song.

Franchise. But I hate singing.

Zaidee. Then we'll excuse you. Go down into the cellar you can't hear us there. Come, come! Ready, and all join in the chorus. [*Here Zaidee can introduce song, dance or any other diversity.*] [*Exit call boy as she finishes.*]

Call boy. Nurse, time!

Zaidee. That means business, and goodness me, what a state I'm in to get off my dialogue with Lady Capulet, but I must simmer down, simmer down! Tralala, folks, you'll have to 'scuse me. I'll be back in 'steen minutes. [*Exit Zaidee.*] [*Manager rushes on.*]

Manager. I'm ruined—ruined! Only five minutes left, and

he does not come. Heaven, what's to be done ! Fool that I was not to employ that fellow this morning ; but how was I to know that Barnes would be crazy enough to get sick just at this time. What a devil of a pickle ! Romeo and Juliet with Mercutio left out is as bad as Hamlet without Hamlet. Something must be done ; and that quickly, too. Oh, if I could only read the part, but deuce take it, I've never read a line of it, and there's nothing more difficult in Shakespeare. Oh, misery, why was I ever born ! And to think it should happen on this night above all others, when the Premier is here. I'll kill myself, that's what I'll do. [*Rushing off.*]

Killpatrick. That's about as bad a case as ever I saw in all my born days.

Darrell. [*Pointing.*] Look, look ! See, he's trying to butt his brains out against the wall. [*All crowd to left of stage, and look after Manager. Door opens slowly, enter Macready carrying an imitation of infernal machine very carefully.*]

Macready. The deed must be done, must—be—done. Let's see, it's set for nine o'clock. [*Looking at watch.*] 'Tis now half past eight ; in half an hour this building will be nothing but debris, and the cause of Ireland will have received an impetus that may end in her freedom. Oh, dynamite, dynamite, thou art a cruel expedient, yet England has condemned thousands unjustly, so why need I hesitate ? I have nothing to lose and all to gain. My mangled corpse will be among the ruins, a fitting end for one who hath murdered. But then, think of the helpless women and children who will perish by my act ; think of the homes that will be bereft of their protectors. I—I will not do it ! But stop, Ireland must be free ! Desperate diseases need desperate remedies, and then, ah, then, I will be avenged upon that knave who insulted me. Ha, ha. But no, my conscience cries aloud. I will obey it's prompting. I have yet time to get it out of the house before it explodes, so come on. [*Lifts machine.*] Oh, that I may be spared to reach the docks before— [*Starts to go.*]

Darrell. [*Turning round.*] Hello—who's this ? Why 'tis our old friend, Macready. Your hand, old boy, your hand. No doubt you are surprised to meet me here, and my whole family, too. [*Aside.*] I wonder if he's any dynamite about him. Maybe Sharpe has succeeded. I'll get out of here as soon as possible.

Macready. [*Shaking hands all round.*] But, Darrell, either you or this Manager is a fraud. He denies having engaged me.

Darrell. [*Feigning surprise.*] What, the villain! [*Enter Manager nearly frantic.*]

Manager. Villain, who's a villain? What does this all mean? Am I dreaming, or is it really true that my theatre is invaded by cranks and I am helpless? Get out of this, every one of you! Oh, what am I to do? Barnes hasn't come. Here, prompter, where's the lines? Give them to me! I will read them, though I've never read them before. What a bungle I'll make of it! [*Recognizes Macready.*] Oh, joy, can it be you? [*Falling on his knees to Macready.*] Sir, you are an angel from Heaven! I adore, I worship—

Macready. You're a fool.

Manager. No; I was a fool not to engage you this morning; but sir, I apologize; here on my knees I apologize. Play Mercutio to-night and I will give you anything—anything—

Macready. What, you engage me?

Manager. Yes, yes, at any price.

Darrell. [*Aside to Macready.*] Don't listen to him. He's trying to fool you.

Manager. But he must listen. I say he must. Oh, sir, I never was more in earnest in my life. [*Drawing Macready aside, left.*] There look, listen. * * See, Lady Capulet is holding her confab with Juliet's nurse—in a minute more Mercutio must go on in the street scene. For gracious sake do not hesitate.

Macready. But most noble seignor, my costume. I couldn't go on so?

Manager. True, but here [*rushing to dressing room [R] returning with cloak and cape*] here, put this on.

Macready. [*Putting on coat.*] But my pants?

Manager. Never mind them; we haven't time. You can change next scene. Do you remember your lines?

Macready. Perfectly. I commence by saying. "Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance." But hold on, sir. [*Thinks of his dynamite machine.*] Leave me! Leave me! I want to be alone for one minute. [*Grabbing Machine.*] I'll be back in a second—

Manager. But you shall not go. [*Taking hold of machine.*] Leave your baggage here, we'll take good care of 'it.

Macready. No, no. I cannot. [*Aside.*] If I tell him I am lost. [*Aloud.*] It's important sir. I must, sir, that—that mustn't

emain here another minute. Permit me to take it away and I'll do anything you desire. [*Enter call boy.*]

Call boy. Street, Mercutio!

Manager. [*Dragging Macready.*] Come, come! You can attend to that as soon as the scene's over.

Macready. But, I tell you—

Manager. Can't help it, come and do your best. [*Exit with Macready.*]

Darrell. [*Aside.*] I wonder if it can be that Sharpe has succeeded! I'll be on the safe side and get out. [*Aloud.*] Forward! March!

Franchise. I'll not go an inch until I see how Mr. Macready gets along. I'm just about tired being ordered around by you, and henceforth I want you to understand that when a woman makes up her mind, she—she—well, she makes up her mind, and that's the end of it. [*Enter Zaidée.*]

Zaidée. Go it, old gal, go it. Dad, I guess you'd just better knuckle under at once.

Franchise. It'll be all the worst for him if he don't, that's all I got to say. For six thousand years we have been held in subjection; but now, sir, now the country demands a change, and we're going to have it. Men of your ilk can command men—if they are weak enough to submit; but as for us—us women, we tell you frankly, we're going to be boss.

Killpatrick. Bejabers, the ould womin's riled, and there's going to be some fire-works.

Darrell. I will remember you for this, Mr. Susan. Czarwinski I appoint you to take charge of the party and to return with them all to my hotel by eleven o'clock. I haven't time to dilly-dally here with this fanatical woman. [*Aside.*] Not when infernal machines are about. [*Exit Darrell.*]

Franchise. He's mad, and I don't care a bit. I'm glad he knows that I'll submit to it no longer. Folks, I'm going to leave you all.

All Together. What! oh, don't.

Franchise. Yes, I'm going to lecture. The time has come for women to take the platform. Great Britain shall echo with my words, and throughout the length and breadth of the land women will shake off the shackles of bondage, and towering high above serfdom, will look down upon their former condition, as the poor negro does upon those dreadful ante-bellum days. The spirit of

rebellion is in the breast of every true woman; all they want is some one to take the lead and—

Oscar—Then they'll jump out of the frying pan into the fire.

Zaidee. No arguments, if you please. We're all old cronies here together, and what's the use of quarreling. Oscar, don't you know that the man who dares to reason with a woman, is sure to raise a racket?

Oscar. 'Tis true, 'tis true, and easy to see,
 When women hold their sway,
 Men should not dare to disagree,
 If they would have their way;
 For he who's spared a woman's frown
 Has wisely learned to smooth her down;
 But he who braves a woman's chaff,
 Tickles himself but cannot laugh.

Franchise. Well, sir, what next?

Oscar. Soft words exert a far more potent spell,
 Than all the profanity of blackest—.

Zaidee. 'Snuff said, 'snuff said. You are both wrong, so dry up. Do you know folks, I wish you'd all go round in front of the curtain and see me act? It's kinder hard for me to play peace-maker behind the scenes and nurse a great big baby in front of them all at the same time. I have to smooth up matters for poor Romeo in the next act, and it takes all the brains I've got to watch my cues. Now, there, listen! [*Goes to side left.*] Ah, Mercutio is commencing his speech about Queen Mab. His voice sounds strange. That surely can't be Mr. Barnes. How eloquently he speaks! What a clear beautiful voice; but look—look at his rigging—why, I declare he's his street pants on—being he's crazy, I wonder. Here's a go—something's up, I'll bet my life. Come this way, all this way, I'll pass you into the gallery. [*Exit all excepting Czarwinski.*]

Czarwinski Macready talks strangely. I wonder if he meditates upon using the machine I gave to Sharpe? If not, what did Sharpe want it for? I'll wait here and see him when he comes off. [*Notices machine.*] Helloh, what's that? By the spirit of the Czar, it looks like one of my own treasures. [*Examines it.*] Well, well, what in the world is it doing here? And set too, by Jupiter, this looks dangerous! By unscrewing this knob I can find out what time it is intended to go off. [*Takes out back of machine.*] Heigho, the fireworks to begin at nine o'clock! It must be nearly that now. [*Looks at watch.*] It wants only two minutes of it.

What can I do to avert this terrible disaster? If I try to remove the machine I'll be blown up with it in my hands; yet if I leave it here a thousand persons will be slaughtered. Terrible! I am a Nihilist, I hate royalty, I wouldn't raise my finger to save the Prince of Wales being blown to atoms; but I cannot see innocent people murdered to remedy political wrongs. No, I myself will perish, rather. [*Looks at watch.*] But one minute left. Heaven! [*Raises machine in his arms.*] Now to the river. [*Hesitates.*] Oh, happy thought! I will remove the dynamite. [*Takes out knife and after considerable effort extracts an open can from bottom of machine.*] Saved, saved! [*A heavy weight falls to floor with loud thud.*] I'll patch it up so that Macready won't know that it's been tampered with. Hang there, Mr. Weight, and fall again whenever you wish to. [*Starts to go with can of dynamite in his hand; loud applause in left wings.*] Not a person of that vast audience shall ever know the terrible calamity from which they have escaped. [*More applause.*] [*Enter Manager.*]

Manager. Grand! Glorious! Superb! I never witnessed such acting before. That man, Macready, is the very counterpart of the late lamented actor of the same name. The audience is fairly wild with enthusiasm. I'll engage him in Barnes' place and my fortune's made. [*More applause.*] Ah, ha, that's sweet music in my ears! The Premier himself has been applauding until his hands must ache. [*Sees Czarwinski.*] What have you there, my good fellow?

Czarwinski. Nothing, only—only—I'm going to take it home.

Manager. No, you're not. Nothing goes out of this building without my permission. Give it here! [*Grabs can.*]

Czarwinski. For mercy sake, do not touch it, sir! You—you—that is, it's—it's—dyna—no, it's blue vitriol!

Manager. Bosh! Blue vitriol! What's it doing here?

Zzarwinski. Why, sir, I brought it for the telephone.

Manager. [*Handing it to him.*] Then see that you use it carefully.

Czarwinski. That I will, sir, and some day you will thank me for the care I have taken of it. [*Exit.*] [*Loud applause [L] and enter Macready, bowing, as if just leaving the audience.*]

Macready. Thank God, it's over! Oh, have I yet time—time— [*Applause outside continuing.*]

Manager. Oh you have done grandly, sir; grandly. Listen, they are determined to bring you out.

Macready. Hush up! Leave me alone! Beg pardon, I mean I won't go. That is, be kind enough to get out for a few minutes. [*Continued applause.*]

Manager. Heavens, man, are you crazy? The audience is wild. They'll tear down the house if you don't respond.

Macready. [*Rushes out and quickly returns.*] Now, there! are you satisfied? Leave me, I say, leave me. If you don't, you—you will be a dead man.

Manager. [*Aside.*] Ah, I see I have a lunatic to deal with; but he's a great actor, and I must humor him. [*Aloud.*] To show you sir that I appreciate your ability, I desire to make an engagement with you at once. I will—

Macready. We'll talk of that some other time. [*Looks at watch.*] Merciful goodness, it's five minutes past nine. Oh, what will I do! What will I do! [*Grabs machine in his arms.*] I go and I may not return again.

Manager. [*Stopping him.*] But you shall not leave. The play isn't half through and you mustn't go. You know you have to die yet.

Macready. Yes I know that, and you, too, will have to die if you don't let me go. [*More applause.*] [*Enter Zaidee.*]

Manager. [*Rubbing his hands.*] Another glorious success. Ah, Miss Zaidee, you are bound to make a great actress.

Zaidee. Thanks, old man, ever so much. But tell me—tell me who is it that's playing Mercutio; he fairly took the house by storm. All the company are talking about him.

Manager. [*Pointing to Macready.*] There he is. [*Aside.*] and I fear a little off here [*touching his forehead.*]

Zaidee. What! Mr. Macready, you here? Why, this is charming. I'm surprised.

Macready. Away, child, away. Don't come near me. I'm dangerous. [*Rushing up and down the stage.*] Oh, let me out, let me out! [*To Manager.*] Stand out of my way or I'll brain you.

Manager. Help, help, help! [*Stage hands, actors, etc., rush on stage.*]

Manager. Seize him, seize him, he's crazy!

Macready. Hands off. I will die rather than stay here. You don't know, you don't realize.—[*They all crowd around him, overpowering him.*]

Zaidee. [*Interfering.*] I say, boys, give the old man a chance. Maybe he just wants to get out to see a man, or to take a short drink. I notice gentlemen in the audience doing the same thing, so why shouldn't the actors behind the curtain have a like privilege? So let him go.

Manager. What, go out upon the street in that style? He'd be arrested.

Zaidee. Wouldn't be your funeral if he were.

Manager. But he'll be called in a few minutes.

Macready. Oh, please let me go. I'll be back in time.

[*Enter call boy.*]

Call boy. Mercutio, time!

Macready. We are lost—all lost. Recollect, sir, when you are mouldering and rotting in your grave that I did the best I could to save you. You think me mad, but sir, there is reason in my madness. I leave you, but we may perish any moment. [*Pointing to machine.*] That, sir, is an infernal machine and contains dynamite—dynamite—do you hear? [*Exit.*]

Manager. [*Frightened.*] Mercy, man, mercy. For heaven's sake take it away. Let the piece wait. The people would rather have the whole business postponed, than to be hastened into Eternity. Come back, oh, come back! I say stop the play, stop the play.

Zaidee. What's the use getting frightened, he's only coddling you. See, here, Mr. Manager, I ain't a feard of it. [*Goes up to machine and examines it.*] [*Aside.*] Cracky, 'tis one of Czarwinski's sure as I'm born. I wonder if it's loaded? [*Aloud.*] Leave me alone, Mister. I'll attend to this. I'm from America, and we're used to them over there.

Manager. [*Going.*] I'll just step across the street, you can call me when it's all safe. [*Exit.*]

Zaidee. Hold on, old man, take this with you. He's gone. It's no use. The big coward—he'd desert his theatre and allow all these people to perish, rather than risk his own miserable life by carrying this away with him. Geminy, 'tisn't a pleasant position for me to be here all alone with an infernal machine, and it liable to go off any minute. Boo, my teeth clatter! I must be getting the ager. What can I do? Yes, that's it, I'll take it and run just as fast as I can. No, that'll make it go off, and maybe kill a whole lot of people on the street. Hello, there, I'll just put it in the safe. [*Opens iron safe right of stage.*] 'Tis mighty lucky 'tain't locked.

Even if dynamite can blow up a great strong iron thing like this, I 'speck it won't do near as much damage as if 'twere left out here. [*Locks it in safe.*] It's *safe* now. [*Loud applause left*] Listen to that. Macready's setting the people crazy, like himself. Look at him, his eyes fairly sparkle fire. Poor Romeo is like a supe along side of him. Cracky, half the audience have risen in their seats! [*Loud cheering, bravo, etc.*] They are waving their handkerchiefs and cheering like demons. Ah, he's going through the death scene.

Macready. [*As Mercutio outside [L.]*

"Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worm's meat of me :—
I have it, and soundly, too :—Your houses!"

[*Enter Macready borne by Benvolio. Tremendous applause continuing during the following soliloquy.*]

Macready. I have reached the edge of the cliff. It but remains for me to throw myself into the yearning abyss. Cheer on, ye fools. I will be with you once again and will unfold to you a terrible truth. Brace up, Macready, it's not acting you have before you this time—you have to face stern reality. Justice shall be appeased. I will make a full surrender. [*Exit Macready.*]

Zaidee. [*Aside.*] What does he mean by such talk? Ah, he steps to the front of the stage. Is he going to repeat? No, no. Hark, he is speaking! Gracious, what is he talking about? Murder! * * The audience are rushing for the doors. * * Has he told them about the dynamite, I wonder. * * * * No. See, the Premier still remains seated and as calm as a statue. Strange men spring upon the stage, the police at the head of them. See, see, they rush towards Mr. Macready! Ah, mercy, they are putting handcuffs on his wrists. They come this way. Oh, what has happened! [*Enter Policemen with Macready handcuffed, Sutherland, gentlemen, actors, all the cranks, also Manager from right of stage.*]

Macready. Take me away. The darkest, blackest dungeon in your prison is too good for me.

Manager. Gentlemen, gentlemen, what does this all mean? Is the theatre in danger?

Macready. It means sir, that though I am by profession an actor, I am by my villainy also a murderer. A murderer, do you

hear? These hands of mine have been steeped in the blood of a fellow man, and I have given myself up to the law.

Manager. He is crazy.

Macready. No, I am not. I am as sane as any of you. Would to God that I were a lunatic. But, alas! remorse is not charitable enough to drive me mad. Every word I said just now in the presence of yon multitude of witnesses is true. The blood of the slain cries out against me. The law of God is an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and a life for a life; the law of man is equally just and condemns murderers to the scaffold. So why tarry here? Away, away!

Policeman. What shall we do?

Manager. Leave him to me. He'll be all right by the morning.

Sutherland. No, officer, your prisoner has spoken the truth. He has given himself up to the law, so the law must keep him in custody until he expiates his crime.

Macready. Upon the gallows.

Manager. What, Sutherland, do you believe him guilty?

Sutherland. I not only believe it but I know it. I can prove him to be the murderer of Lord Nordville. So, officer, do your duty. [*Officer starts to go with prisoner.*]

Zaidee. Stop, stop. You are arresting an innocent man. Look, look into that man's face and tell me is guilt written there? I tell you, gentlemen, he is innocent though he believes himself guilty. If I were a judge, no matter if twenty witnesses swore that he committed murder, I wouldn't believe them. What, you doubt my word? You think woman's instinct worth nothing? Because you have a poor trembling fellow in your grasp and because he looks nearly frightened to death and swears that he is a criminal, you believe him rather than your own senses. One moment more. Let me tell you this much and you will find it to be true: Mr. Macready may be crazy and I believe he is, but he ain't wicked. Somebody's worked upon him and got him here to commit a crime.

Sutherland. But, Zaidee, I say—

Zaidee. Hush up! I guess I know what I'm talking about. Yes, some one is behind all this, mark my word. [*Loud crash inside of the safe, all terribly frightened.*]

Macready. The end is come. I—I— [*Swoons.*]

Zaidee. Don't be alarmed, gentlemen, that was only a little

fireworks busting in the safe. [*Aside.*] Cracky, I hope it's all over!

Sutherland. We are losing time. Officers, your duty.

Zaidee. Take him then if you must, but you will find that I am right. [*Stoops down and kisses Macready on forehead.*] Good bye, poor dear old fool, Zaidee will visit you in the jail every day until all this mystery is explained. And as for Mister Ernest Sutherland he need never speak to me again.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Cell in the Old Bailey, London.*

Enter Jailor and Macready (in chains.)

Jailor. You will be called in a few minutes before the Criminal Court. Do you desire counsel to defend you?

Macready. [*Sharply.*] No.

Jailor. But you must have a lawyer. It's absolutely necessary to have one at the trial. I know a young man who will take the case for a £10 retainer and—if he gets you off—

Macready. But I tell you I do not want an attorney. If I wished to cheat justice I would employ one. Law is a game of blind-man's buff; no matter how just or unjust, the accusation, the man's conviction or acquittal depends upon his lawyer's ability to blindfold the judge. I am guilty, guilty I say and will make no defense.

Jailor. [*Aside.*] That settles the divy I expected to make with Lawyer Potts. [*Aloud.*] Very well, you may regret this foolish foolhardiness. If you should change your mind just go there and rattle your chains at the door and I'll be back in a jiffy. Remember, there's a technical legal point that will make a free man of you. [*Exit jailor.*]

Macready. What does he mean by that? "A technical point that will make a free man of me." Oh yes, yes, Sutherland told me that by the laws of England no man can be tried twice for the same offense. Bah, I am guilty! I will not stoop to thus swindle justice. What a contrast there is between law and justice. Law is like a rotten net, the meshes of which are great loop-holes through which the cunning may always escape. But justice is a

staunch seine which holds its captive forever. Ah, while we may evade the law we cannot cheat justice, for she pierces through the strongest shield of chicanery, assumes control of our consciences and gnaws at our very souls. I would rather be innocent, though sentenced by law to undergo its greatest penalty than to be guilty and be what that jailor called a free man. The life-convict of Newgate, if he knows within his own heart that he has been unjustly accused is happier than the most honored man in the outside world who gloats over "blood money." But why need I moralize? The trial will soon begin and I will stand before my fellow man a self-convicted felon. Oh, frightful thought, yet how just! The good, kind minister who visited me yesterday told me to make my peace with God. Peace with God—as if a murderer could go with bloody hands and ask his Creator to be merciful to such a creature. No, no—no! I am too base, too villainous to bow before the Mercy Seat. My punishment is merited. If I have no right to plead for leniency to, my earthly judge I surely will not insult Deity by praying, "Lord receive me into Thy Kingdom." Bah, 'tis hollow mockery. As I lived so will I die, for death-bed repentances have no more potency than idle words. [*Enter jailor.*]

Jailor. Prisoner, a lady waits without. She wishes to speak with you.

Macready. Admit her. [*Exit jailor.*] Who can it be? [*Enter Zaidée.*] Ah, Miss Zaidée, this is kind of you.

Zaidée. Not Miss Zaidée, but Zaidée, please. The same Zaidée that I was when you told me that horrid Dad and Mam weren't Dad and Mam at all, but wicked impostors. See, I've brought you this nice bouquet. I had nearly all of them daisies, 'cos daisies mean innocence in the language of flowers.

Macready. Ah, you are so good, so kind. But you—you Zaidée, are the last one in the world who ought to be—be merciful to me, for I—I—I'm the mur—murderer of your fath—

Zaidée. Now, don't, don't say that. You'll make me cry, and then I'll look awful horrid. I don't care what you say, I wouldn't believe you guilty not if you swore to it forty times a day, as fast as a horse can trot. What's more, you ain't going to stay in prison much longer, either. I've brought you an awful smart lawyer, he my un— ('lev mind who he is) but he says he's sure you'll be let off.

Macready. Remember, I've positively refused to allow any defense to be made.

Zaidee. You positively allow nothing of the sort. But before I call him in I want to tell you a great big secret. Let's set down here. Cross your breath you'll never tell?

Macready. I promise.

Zaidee. Well, I guess you kinder 'spicioned that I was dead gone on Mr. Sutherland?

Macready. "Dead gone," what's that?

Zaidee. Pshaw! Don't you know? Dead gone means smashed, head over heels, kerwolloped, up to your ears in love.

Macready. Ah, now I understand.

Zaidee. And you oughter. Somehow or other he was just my style. But 'tain't 'cause he's pretty that I love him. No 'deed it's 'cos he's snice.

Macready. Because he's what?

Zaidee. "Snice"—s-n-i-c-e-snice. Snice to be good, slick, scrumptious. Now you know what "snice" is. And Erny is just awful snice. Every time he used to come near me I'd feel the creepers coming on. Creepers are awful funny things; they set your heart a bouncing, you feel just like you'd like to kiss somebody plum in the mouth. But Uncle says 'tisin't lady-like, so I don't kiss Erny. I'm living with Uncle now, he's snice, too. I've quit the stage and am playing a new part. That of a big high tomfool of a lady. Ain't these duds snobby? But they're nothing to what I've got home chucked away in my Swaratoga.

Macready. It does me good to see you so happy. Ah, if your poor father were alive—

Zaidee. Now there you go again. It's no use to cry over spilt milk. My father's dead and though I have a little quiet weep over it every day all to myself, I don't like to talk about it. Well, as I was saying, Uncle's awfully kind and tells me I can get married to Mr. Sutherland if I want to.

Macready. And I am sure you do.

Zaidee. Yes, I 'speck so; but I ain't going to marry him 'till after the trial, and not even then unless you are let off.

Macready. Why do you make that a condition?

Zaidee. 'Cos I wouldn't make up with Erny until he'd promised. Oh, but I was mad with him about that night at the theatre. He daring to say you were guilty without my consent! So I told

him that unless he did everything in his power to get you acquitted I would not marry him. He has promised and he will keep his word.

Macready. God bless you, my child. Your kindness to me is so strange, so unnatural that it gives me both pleasure and pain. Pleasure because it shows that you at least believe me innocent, and pain because my conscience punishes me tenfold more acutely when I know that you should curse rather than bless me.

Zaidee. Oh, Mr. Macready, I couldn't curse. I never said a bad word in all my life. Don't you tell anybody 'bout me being 'gaged to Mr. Sutherland. You know I don't care, only you know a young girl don't like everybody to know she's 'gaged when she's 'gaged. Oh, you understand—

Macready. No danger of my telling it. Whom would I tell it to?

Zaidee. Oh, lots of people, for you'll soon be free.

Macready. Alas, my child, it shall never be so. For, even if the Judge acquits, there's a monitor which will never, never cease tormenting me. Punishment which comes from within a man's own self is far more terrible than outside forces can inflict.

Zaidee. Don't talk so gloomily. You'll give me the blues. But the lawyer is waiting, I'll call him in.

Macready. No, stop, I will not see him.

Zaidee. But you must. Please, for my sake.

Macready. I am guilty, so why—

Zaidee. You're a goose. I guess the Judge and jury don't know you're guilty, and they've got to prove it. [*Goes to door and calls:*] Say, you there, bring the lawyer in! Don't be afraid of him, Mr. Macready, he's snice, too.

Macready. But I protest. [*Enter Jailor and Donald Morton.*] What—in the holy name of Heaven! You are Donald Morton, the brother of Lord Nordville! Surely, you come to prosecute rather than defend.

Morton. No, at the request of my niece, here, I propose conducting the case for the defense.

Zaidee. Yes, and Uncle's going to have you cleared, too.

Macready. But I tell him I'm guilty.

Morton. The burden of proof is upon the government.

Macready. And you are willing to defend me though I frankly confess to be the murderer of your own brother?

Morton. Yes, in spite of your confession I undertake the case.

Macready. Then, sir, I tell you there is not an ounce of manhood in your composition.

Morton. Have a care, sir ; have a care.

Macready. I know exactly what I am saying. If you are willing to stand before the bar of justice and the bar of God, pleading for the life of the man who murdered your own brother ; if you make a single effort to save my worthless life from a felon's doom you are not worthy to be called a man. You are a cur who licks the hand that's thrashing him.

Morton. No other man on earth would dare to speak thus to me. But I know your condition. I will consider it. The time will soon come when you will apologize for those cruel words. Can I enter my appearance as your counsel ?

Macready. No, a thousand times no !

Zaidee. Oh, say yes, for my sake, please, just for my sake.

Macready. No—no—no. Not even for— [*Hesitating.*]
[*Aside.*] I'll humor her. [*Aloud.*] Yes. Yes, you may. Go—go—

Zaidee. Now, that's just splendid in you. Come along, Uncle, we'll hurry to the court house. Good-bye, good-bye.
[*Exit Zaidee and Morton.*]

Macready. That man is either the most unnatural brother that ever lived or else he's crazy. But stop—maybe he thinks I'm insane. What did he mean by saying he would consider my condition ? Heavens, if he is going to try to prove insanity, what will I do ? The more I confess my guilt the more they will believe his theory. One thing is certain, if they acquit me I will take my own life. [*Enter jailor.*]

Jailor. You are wanted. Come.

Macready. The doom is near. Lead on. [*Exit jailor and Macready.*]

SCENE 2.—*A Court Room. Judge (C.) Jury (L.) Prisoner (R.) Jailor near him. Witness stand (L.) Crier (R.) Counsel table (C.) forward.—Benches upon which are seated Zaidee, Sutherland, Darrell, Miss Franchise, Prosecuting Attorney and Morton at Counsel Table.*

Judge. Prisoner at the bar you have heard the indictment. What say you—are you guilty or not ?

Macready. Guilty.

Morton. May it please your Honor, I hold that the plea of the prisoner should be accepted with reluctance. The defendant does not fully understand the charge or else he is actuated by a morbid desire for punishment. I trust your Honor will explain to him the effect of his plea.

Judge. Prisoner at the bar, you stand accused of a capital offense. Whether you are innocent or guilty it is the duty of this Court to ascertain and pass upon. If you persist in adhering to the plea you have entered, nothing remains but for me to pass sentence. You will thus be deprived of a trial and a pardon alone can save you from being hanged by the neck until you are dead. You have still a chance to correct your plea, and by so doing you will put the burden of proof on the government. I ask you again, what say you, are you guilty or not guilty?

Zaidee. Not guilty.

Judge. Silence in the court.

Zaidee. [*Rising, Morton trying to restrain her.*] But, Mr. Judge, I tell you he's not guilty. No more than you are this minute. He—

Judge. Silence! Sheriff, put that woman out of court.

Morton. May it please your Honor, to waive your order. The young lady does not understand, but I will promise she will not again interrupt the proceedings.

Judge. She may remain, but if she speaks again I will order her imprisoned for contempt of court.

Zaidee. Can't I say just one wee little word?

Morton. For gracious sake be quiet. You will make the Judge hang Macready.

Zaidee. Then I'll hush up.

Judge. The prisoner has heard the question, is he prepared to plead? Be careful. Your life may depend upon your words.

Macready. I have spoken. My answer first is my answer last. But, your Honor, that you may fully understand the motives of my confession, may I preface it with a few words?

Judge. An unusual request—in fact, these are unusual proceedings. You may speak.

Macready. You say 'tis not usual for a man accused of a capital offense to plead guilty? And why is this so? Because, as Shakespeare says:—"Conscience doth make cowards of us all," and though there is in the bosom of every murderer a voice of terror with "a thousand several tongues," each telling him, "he'd

better be with the dead" than undergo the horrible punishment that comes from within; still they cling to their miserable lives as though a ray of hope had pierced even to their sin-begrimed souls. With the prisoner before you it is not so. I stand here pleading for justice. Justice not only to the living but to the dead. You cannot acquit me, for your acquittal would be a hollow mockery—a defiance of the laws of the land—an outrage to God. See, see these hands, they are steeped in blood—the blood of the best of men, and it cries for vengeance. Lord Nordville was my friend—I loved him as a brother, yet we quarrelled and I followed him intending to punish him for a supposed insult. I felled him to the ground. I was excited. I knew not that I had in my hand a deadly weapon, but it must have been so for he fell at my feet a mangled corpse. Corpse, do you hear—my God—I say a corpse! I see his ghastly eyes piercing my soul. I hear him groan. I—I—there, look, the blood is coursing from his wound. I bathe my hands in it. Oh, why do you delay? My life is his—is his. [*Falls back in his seat.*] [*Darrell, visibly affected, starts to go, but is restrained by Morton.*]

Judge. Ah, conscience is a great detective—a great detective. Prisoner at the bar, you appear to have been a murderer, but it seems to me that you are a singularly honest one. As you have persisted in your plea, it is the painful duty of this court to pass sentence. You will rise. [*Macready, assisted by jailor, rises.*] The sentence of Her Majesty's Court is, that you be taken hence to the public jail where you will be detained until such date as the Home Secretary may appoint, and thence taken to the place of execution, and there—

Morton. Your Honor—

Judge. Silence in the court, do not interrupt in the delivery of the sentence. And there be—

Morton. I rise to make a motion in arrest of judgment.

Judge. Ah, in that case I will hear you.

Morton. My motion is based upon the fact that the indictment against the prisoner is illegal. If your Honor will refer to the Criminal Docket for the September term, 1872, he will find that this man has been tried before for the same offense and legally acquitted. I need not refer you to cases decided upon the well-established principle of common law that no man can be twice tried upon the same indictment.

Judge. True, true. [*Referring to docket.*] I find the record

here. Prisoner at the bar, you have made a fortunate escape. One moment more and you would have been sentenced. You are dis—

Macready. Ah, 'tis just as I thought. Justice is dead, and in her place there sits a tyrant called law, which condemns the innocent, while the guilty escape.

Judge. Silence, sirrah, silence.

Macready. I will not be silent. Here in the presence of these witnesses I stand a living proof of the inadequacy of the law.

Judge. Such conduct is unheard of. Sheriff—

Macready. Hands off. Surely a man is allowed to speak in his own defense.

Judge. But you—you fool—you are injuring your case.

Macready. Your Honor, I stand here a self-confessed murderer, and yet you were about to discharge me, to set me free upon the world, for what all you know a blood-thirsty wretch. I tell you I am guilty, yet you say, "go, you are free;" is that justice?

Judge. But the law, man, the law—

Macready. The law that is so technical that it sets a murderer free is not worth being called a law.

Judge. I commit you to Newgate for contempt of court. Sheriff, take him away.

Macready. But tell me, your Honor, can I not waive the advantage I would have under the common law, and be tried again?

Morton. A waiver would not be legal, for the sentence could not be carried out.

Judge. In the opinion of this court, the learned counsel is in error. Such a waiver is not upon the books that I know of, yet I see no reason why the prisoner should not be at liberty to waive the benefits of a technicality. We will proceed with the trial.

Morton. And your Honor will accept the man's confession?

Judge. Why should I not?

Morton. Because he knows not what he says—He is insane.

Macready. 'Tis false I—I—

Judge. Silence! Have you evidence to offer to that effect?

Morton. We have the evidence of the man's own actions before this Honorable Court.

Judge. The court admits he has not acted rationally.

Prosecuting Attorney. It is now my turn to speak. I have remained silent because the accused, having confessed his crime it remained but for the Court to pass sentence. As it seems that he is to be tried contrary to a well-known principle of common law and the defense has put in the plea of insanity, it devolves upon them to establish the same.

Morton. After you have proven the crime.

P. A. That will be very easy to do, since we have the prisoner's acknowledgement of the murder.

Morton. But we claim he is insane and incompetent to plead, and therefor—

Judge. The only way I can see out of this difficulty is to try him as though he had entered the usual plea of not guilty. Is the prosecution ready for trial?

P. A. I am.

Judge. Then go ahead. Call the first witness.

P. A. Call Ambrose Smith.

Crier. Ambrose Smith take the stand. [*He obeys.*]

Judge. Waive the usual questions. He is of lawful age.

P. A. Mr. Smith, do you know the prisoner at the bar?

Smith. Yes sir. No, sir, that is, only by sight.

Morton. What do you mean by sight?

Smith. That is, I used to know him.

Morton. Ah!

P. A. Please don't interrupt the examination. Mr. Smith, did you see the prisoner on the night of the murder?

Smith. Yes, sir. I saw him crossing Fleet street; he muttered to himself as he passed me, "To-night fixes it between Lord Nordville and me" or something like that.

P. A. Did you see him afterwards?

Smith. No sir.

P. A. I am through, Mr. Morton, the witness is in your hands.

Morton. Recollect man, you are on your oath. Do you positively know it was the prisoner at the bar?

Smith. Yes sir. I could not have been mistaken, because I saw him by the full light of the moon.

Morton. The moon must have been shining very brightly upon the night of the murder or you could not have recognized the prisoner.

Smith. Yes sir, it was as light as day out.

Morton. I ask the court to refer to this almanac for 1872 and notice if the moon had risen by ten o'clock on the night of February 17th. [*Handing almanac to Judge who examines it.*]

Judge. Ah, this is official. The court is bound to take presumption of the condition of the heavenly bodies. What day of the month did you say, counsellor?

Morton. The seventeenth.

Judge. Yes, and here it is. There was a new moon that night, and I declare it set at 8.10 P. M. Gentlemen of the jury, examine this. [*Handing it to them.*] The witness has perjured himself. I will commit—

Morton. If the court and jury are satisfied to that effect, I am ready to proceed.

P. A. Call Detective Sly.

Crier. Detective Sly, take the stand. [*Sly obeys.*]

P. A. What do you know of the murder?

Sly. Nothing, sir, only that I was employed to hunt for clues.

P. A. How did you succeed?

Sly. I found a bloody knife thrown in an alley-way near the scene.

P. A. [*Holding up knife.*] Is this the one?

Sly. [*Examining it.*] Yes sir, that's it. I know it by its particular shape, the blood stains and the name upon the handle.

P. A. Gentlemen of the jury, be kind enough to examine the knife. [*Hands it around to them.*] You will notice that the name of the prisoner is cut in the handle. I have nothing further to ask the witness.

Morton. Did you secure any other clues?

Sly. No sir; that is—no.

Morton. Certainly a detective of your well-known ability would not stop an investigation when only on the threshold of positive evidence. When did you find this knife?

Sly. About a month after the murder, half hidden in a lot of rubbish in the alley.

Morton. It must have been close to somebody's fence.

Sly. Yes sir, just where the gate opened.

Morton. Did you not inquire who lived there?

Sly. Yes, but the party who was there when the murder was committed had left for America a few days before.

Morton. And the name of that party was—

Sly. A Mr. Sharpe. The lady of the house told me that he had left the country because he had seen the murder committed and was afraid he'd be called in as a witness. Before leaving he told the lady that Macready was the murderer.

Morton. Did you not try to find this man Sharpe?

Sly. Yes, but I did not succeed.

Morton. That will do.

P. A. Call Paul Sharpe.

Crier. Paul Sharpe take the stand.

P. A. Are you the man Sharpe just referred to?

Sharpe. Yes, sir.

P. A. Did you leave the country because you did not desire to testify?

Sharpe. Yes sir.

P. A. Tell the Court and Jury what you know of this murder.

Sharpe. On the evening in question, I was sitting near my window, the second story front, when I heard loud words sounding like a threat. I sprang to my window and looked out below. Just then I saw two men scuffling. I saw one raise a knife aloft and then plunge it into the breast of the other who sank upon the pavement in a heap.

P. A. Could you recognize the man who struck the blow?

Sharpe. Yes sir; that man is the prisoner.

P. A. I am through and willing to rest the case here.

Morton. With the permission of the court I will reserve cross-questioning the last witness. Call Susan B. Franchise.

Crier. Susan B. Franchise take the stand. [*She obeys.*]

Franchise. If I may say few words before I open my mouth I would like to appeal to all persons present in the holy name of woman. This court is run entirely by men. It should not be so. There should be a woman on that judge's bench, there should be women at that counsel's desk, there should be women in that jury box, there should be women in—

Zaidee. The prisoner's dock.

Judge. Silence in the court. [*To Franchise.*] You, madam, must be quiet and answer only when you are questioned.

Franchise. I guess I was only going to say a few words. The subject of woman's suffrage is one of such vital importance

that we should never miss an opportunity to speak and do our utmost to—

Judge. Silence!

Morton. Pray, Miss Franchise, postpone your lecture until we get through with the case.

Franchise. All-right, only I think it unfair for men to run the whole court-house. I'd just like to—

Zaidee. O, switch off, old gal, switch off.

Judge. Silence! *Silence!*

Morton. Are you acquainted with the prisoner at the bar?

Franchise. Acquainted! Well I should reckon. We were *boys* together.

Morton. What of his reputation?

Franchise. It couldn't be better, not even if he'd been born a girl. Talk as you please about bad boys making good men, I don't believe it. That man standing there [*pointing to Macready*] was a good baby, a good boy and a good man, and in fact he's been good all the time. It's all foolishness to try him for this murder; he's so tender-hearted he wouldn't kill a flea. True he went on the stage without his parents' consent, but I don't blame him for that, I did the same thing. I tell you, Mr. Lawyer, there's only one fault that I have to find with him, and that is—

P. A. What?

Franchise. He don't endorse female suffrage.

P. A. I object to this witness. Her evidence is irrelevant.

Franchise. Whose aunt?

Morton. Your Honor, I'll try to pin her down to the point at issue.

Franchise. No you won't. If you pin me I'll scream.

Morton. Did you know Lord Nordville?

Franchise. Intimately. I used to visit him at his office, and he gave me several contributions for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Besides, I sewed for his wife at his home for a month before the murder.

Morton. What was the relationship between him and the prisoner at the bar?

Franchise. They were the best and truest friends. I never knew them to quarrel.

Morton. Did he have among his acquaintances a man by the name of Henry Page?

Franchise. No, but a man of that name came to his house on the morning of the murder.

Morton. Can you say for what purpose?

Franchise. Yes, I heard them talking in the back office. Page begged Lord Nordville not to prosecute him for a forgery he had committed.

Darrell. [*Rising excitedly.*] She lies. I tell you she lies. He charged me with the crime but I was innocent. I only wanted — [*Sets down.*] [*Aside.*] What a fool I have made of myself.

Morton. Notice, your Honor and gentlemen of the jury, this man who professes to be Henry Darrell now acknowledges that he is also Henry Page.

Darrell. I don't. I—I'm Darrell—Henry Darrell.

Judge. Silence in the court.

Morton. Did Nordville consent?

Franchise. No, he was inexorable.

Morton. What next occurred?

Franchise. Nothing, only Lord Nordville told him to begone that he would have no mercy upon a forger and a thief.

Morton. I understand that while you were in America you lived for six months at a hotel called Crank's Retreat, kept by this man Page or Darrell, whichever you choose to call him. How do you reconcile that fact with the evidence you have just given?

Franchise. I did not know that Page and Darrell were one and the same person. In fact I did not see Page before I met Darrell, and the only way I learned the name of the man who visited Lord Nordville that day was that I heard my Lord tell his wife so at the dinner table. Although I heard Lord Nordville and Page in the office talking, I could not see them.

Morton. Go on.

Franchise. Well, Darrell came to me in America and offered me a home. I accepted, and since then—

P. A. These questions have nothing to do with the prisoner and I object.

Morton. The witness is excused.

Judge. Be seated, madam, you are through testifying.

Franchise. No, I'm not. There's another case on trial and I know lots about it. The people of this country and every country will have to decide sooner or later whether the poor, much-abused women are to continue to set supinely down and allow men to boss the universe.

Judge. Silence, ma'am, silence; this is no place for—

Franchise. Yes it is. Liberty of speech is recognized everywhere. I make it a rule, sir, I make it a rule never to lose an opportunity to say a word in favor of the emancipation of woman. We do not expect to assume control over the whole world by a single effort but by united effort. I want you, sir, you who call yourself a judge, to acknowledge that when the Creator put Eve in the Garden of Eden He clothed her with appellate jurisdiction.

Judge. No, ma'am, the scripture tells us that it was simply a figleaf.

Franchise. None of your funny business, sir, I won't have it. I claim that in Eve there was invested an absolute veto over all of Adam's acts and the fact that he ate the forbidden fruit showed that he acknowledged her *appel-ate* jurisdiction.

Judge. I commit the witness.

Franchise. Yes, that's it. Commit me, commit me—it's just like you nasty men. You have the reins all in your own hands. Only wait till we get in your place, we'll send you to jail for ninety-nine years for getting drunk.

Judge. Officers away with her. [*Officers of court approach her.*]

Franchise. Don't you dare put your dirty hands on me. I'll go without any pushing. But I tell that old bald-headed codger up there with a wig on, that if he condemns the prisoner I'll shoot him so dead he won't know what struck him. [*Exit Franchise.*]

Judge. A threat, by Blackstone, a threat! I—I must—

Morton. We beg your Honor to allow us to proceed. Call Mrs. Caroline Darrell.

Crier. Caroline Darrell take the stand. [*She obeys.*]

Morton. What was your maiden name, madam?

Mrs. D. Ludlow, sir.

Morton. Are you the lawful wife of the man who calls himself Henry Darrell?

Mrs. D. Yes, sir.

Morton. You were married by a minister named Grey, were you not?

Mrs. D. Yes sir. How did you know that?

Morton. Never mind. When were you married?

Mrs. D. In 1875.

Morton. Now madam, under what name was this man Darrell married to you?

Mrs. D. I—I—I refuse to tell.

P. A. Your Honor, these questions are all irrelevant to the point at issue. I ask that you rule them out.

Morton. May it please the Court to allow me to go on. I expect to prove by this witness several links of a chain of evidence favorable to the prisoner. She is the wife of a man who knows more of this murder than any person in this court room. May I continue?

Judge. Go on. Witness you will have to answer the question.

Mrs. D. Am I compelled to tell under what name my husband went when he married me?

Judge. Exactly.

Mrs. D. And if I refuse?

Judge. I will send you to jail until you answer.

Mrs. D. Well then, his name was Henry Page.

Morton. Just what I thought. Now, ma'am, after he married you he took you to his home and passed you off upon a child named Zaidee as her mother?

Mrs. D. Yes.

Morton. Did he tell you he was the father of the child?

Mrs. D. No. He said he had brought her from England with him.

Morton. Do you know when he left England?

Mrs. D. Yes. March, 1872.

Morton. The month after the murder, your Honor, or just about the time the knife was found by Detective Sly. [*To witness:*] Did you not ask him for what reason he kept the child?

Mrs. D. Yes, and he told me that 'twas because he was a — fool. I don't like to swear, your Honor.

Morton. And why did he consider himself a fool?

Mrs. D. Pshaw! Will I have to tell the whole story?

Morton. Yes, there is no other way out of it.

Mrs. D. Well then, Page told me he had gotten into trouble with a man over here in England, and because he wouldn't come to terms he kidnapped the man's infant daughter, hoping to use her for getting money out of him. But I afterwards learned that it was because he thought all lawyers were rascals, and that as

the girl's uncle was a lawyer, he could get money by keeping her away, so that the uncle could get control of her fortune.

Darrell. Curse you! Hold your tongue!

Judge. Silence.

Morton. And he found out that the uncle was an honest man and wouldn't enter into such schemes. I suppose that was the reason he called himself a fool?

Mrs. D. Yes sir, I guess so. Anyway, he found that it would be dangerous to take the child back to England, so he had to keep her against his will.

Morton. I am through with your examination. I will state to the court and jury that yonder sets the child referred to. [*Pointing to Zaidée.*] And that I am the lawyer, uncle and brother of Lord Nordville. Please call Miss Zaidée Morton.

Crier. Zaidée Morton take the stand.

Zaidée. An' where shall I take it?

Morton. He means for you to stand upon it.

Zaidée. Then why didn't he say so?

Morton. State to the jury all you know about the prisoner at the bar, and also about Mr. Darrell.

Zaidée. [*Pointing to Macready.*] I know that that's one of the best men that ever whistled Yankee Doodle, and I know that that's Dad [*Pointing to Darrell*] he used to beat me like the mischief.

Morton. Yes, yes, but we don't want you to tell us that; we want—

Zaidée. Then what did you ask me for? Look at old Dad over there now, he's shaking in his boots; he knows I'm going to tell on him and he's getting scared.

Darrell. Bah! I defy you child, I—

Zaidée. You needn't come your bragadocio over me. 'Spouse Mr. Lawyer asks me about you walking and a' talking in your sleep, and what you said and all like that, don't you 'speck you'd feel more ticklish than Mr. Macready? [*Darrell rises and attempts to leave the room.*]

Judge. Officer detain him. He is attached as a witness.

Zaidée. Yes, don't go Dad, the case is getting awful snice.

Morton. You spoke of Mr. Darrell walking and talking in his sleep, tell me all about it?

Zaidée. I thought you'd ask that. Well, my room was next to Dad and Mam's, and there was a door opening right between

them. Dad used to moan and groan and talk while he was asleep, but I never paid any 'tention to it 'cos I couldn't understand what he was saying. But one night I was lying wide awake in my bed with my eyes open. It was so dark that I could see nothing. I was awful scared. My heart was in my mouth, for all a sudden I felt the door open and some one come in. It was Dad, 'cos I heard him commence to talk. Cracky, but I was glad, 'cos I thought it was a bugler. Well, Dad walked way up to the far corner of the room and said, said he, as if looking around for something: "It must be here, it must be here! Sharpe told me that he would half hide it, so that it could be easily found. I will look at it once more—it has a strange ghastly fascination." Then he picked up one of my old shoes and carried it to the window. The moonlight just then streamed in and I could see him distinctly. He held the old shoe still in his hand and uttered, "'Twas quickly done. A plunge, only a plunge! Ah, little knife, covered with blood, what a tale you could tell! To-morrow you will be found and you will drive the hounds from my track and I will be free. Ha, ha, weapon, I—"

Darrell. [*Springing to his feet.*] Judge, stop her, the girl is mad—mad! I, I never saw the knife after the deed was done. I threw it from me. Sharpe picked it up. I— [*Aside.*] My God, what have I said!

Morton. That will do, Miss Zaidee, I am through.

Zaidee. I told you Judge I'd give him a raking up, and I've done it.

Morton. Call Oscar Wilde.

Crier. Oscar Wilde, take the stand.

Oscar. I cannot see what you want with me.

Morton. What is your business?

Oscar. I mind my own business.

Morton. I mean what is your profession?

Oscar. Oh—ah, can't you see by my looks,
That I'm a man who writes books!
The world by this time should know it
That Oscar is a poet.

Morton. Exactly. But before you commenced to write poetry were you not a scene-shifter at the Old Drury Theatre?

Oscar. Why seekest thou to humble my pride?
Know you not, that all men e'er they stem the tide
And their struggle for life doth fairly begin,

Can trace themselves to lowly origin,
But when men reach the realms of fame
They will not own their humble name.

Morton. But you do not answer my question.

Oscar. Listen low, I'll breathe it soft,
Once on a time I'd mount aloft,
And 'mid the flies a lifting,
Or countless scenes a shifting—
I humbleth myself.

Morton. Then you admit that you were a scene-shifter at the Old Drury.

Oscar. Ay, verily, I can deny it not.

Morton. Were you engaged there in 1872?

Oscar. Ay, truly, for in February of that year the profession I quitted.

Morton. Was Mr. Macready playing there in the early part of the month?

Oscar. Yea, up until a few days before the murder.

Morton. What was he playing?

Oscar. Macbeth.

Morton. Do you remember what became of the dagger used by him during the play?

Oscar. Yes sir. After the piece was withdrawn from the stage he left it in the property room. One day a friend of mine asked me if I would borrow a dagger for him, as he wanted to use it in an amateur performance.

Morton. Yes, yes, and you gave him that same dagger?

Oscar. How in the deuce did you know? As Mr. Macready was then in jail and would not need it, I thought it would be no harm, so I let him have it.

Morton. And what was the name of this man to whom you gave Mr. Macready's dagger?

Darrell. He shall not answer the question. I tell you he shall not. I hadn't a thing to do with it. I—

Judge. Keep quiet, your say will come after awhile. The witness must tell to whom he gave it.

Oscar. [*Pointing to Sharpe.*] To that man sitting there, Paul Sharpe.

Morton. Did you give it to him before or after the murder?

Oscar. After the murder. I know it positively, because Mr.

Macready was in jail at the time or I wouldn't have given it to him. [*Oscar resumes seat.*]

Morton. Call Paul Sharpe.

Crier. Paul Sharpe take the stand. [*Sharpe obeys.*]

Morton. Mr. Sharpe, a little while ago you told us that you saw the prisoner at the bar commit this murder. How can you so positively identify him?

Sharpe. The deed was done directly under my window and I saw the murderer's face distinctly.

Morton. Did the murdered man utter a cry for help?

Sharpe. Yes sir. I can never forget it. Oh, it was frightful to think that no one was there to help the poor fellow.

Morton. Why you just said that you could recognize their faces, and as it was very dark you must have been close.

Sharpe. Oh yes so I was: I could almost touch them.

Morton. Then why didn't you go to his assistance?

Sharpe. I—I—that is, I didn't think of it.

Morton. Ah, you heard heart-rending cries for help but you didn't think of it. Singular fact. Well, after you saw the murder committed what did you do?

Sharpe. I went in and shut the window.

Morton. Shut the window? So you were so greatly interested that you had previously raised the window to have a good look, eh?

Sharpe. I was so excited I hardly knew what I was doing.

Morton. Well, after you shut the window what did you do?

Sharpe. I sat down and—and read the evening paper.

Morton. Didn't you go out to see the crowd?

Sharpe. Yes—oh yes, I saw the crowd.

Morton. Were you not a friend of Henry Page or Darrell at that time?

Sharpe. Yes sir, and he is as honorable a man as ever lived. I think as much of him as I would of a brother.

Morton. And yet you allowed him to be arrested and tried for murder when you say you saw another man commit it. I would not give much for such a friend.

Sharpe. Well, you see, after the murder I—I didn't get any chance to speak to him about it, and—and I was kind of frightened lest he'd be hung, and—

Morton. And you'd be brought in as an accomplice.

Sharpe. No, not that, but—but you know law is very funny, very doubtful.

Morton. Yes, you'll find it exceedingly "funny." Paul Sharpe, you visited Henry Page at the prison before the trial. It's no use trying to deny it ; I know you did.

Sharpe. Well, was there any harm in that ?

Morton. And at that time it was exceedingly doubtful whether he would be convicted, is it not so ?

Sharpe. Yes, I admit it did look shaky for him.

Morton. Yet you would not risk a cross-examination, even if by testifying to the truth you could save your friend's life.

Sharpe. That's so, that's so, but I did help him all I could without that—

Morton. Yes, you even borrowed Mr. Macready's dagger for him.

Sharpe. No—no, that had nothing to with it.

Morton. Then how came it to be found just outside of your gateway after the murder ?

Sharpe. I—I threw it there.

Morton. Ah, you did ; then the murder was not committed with this knife ?

Sharpe. No, it was done with a Spanish poniard.

Morton. How do you know that ?

Darrell. [*Springing to his feet.*] He's a fool, he knows nothing about it. He lies, he lies—

Judge. Silence, man, silence.

Morton. How came the blood upon the knife ?

Sharpe. I stabbed a dog with it.

Morton. That will do. [*Sharpe resumes seat.*] Your Honor and gentlemen of the jury: To point out the value of this man's testimony plainly to you, allow me to remind you of certain facts. Lord Nordville was murdered on the night of February 17, 1872, and when the officers of the law reached the mangled body, two men were found leaning over the corpse, each vehemently accusing the other of the crime. One of these men was the prisoner at the bar and the other [*pointing to Darrell*] was yonder trembling wretch. They were both arrested and tried. Now it appears from the evidence just given that while they were in prison Page or Darrell entered into a conspiracy with this man Sharpe to throw the guilt upon Macready. They concocted a scheme to have his knife found near the scene of the

murder and have since so worked upon his mind that they have even made the prisoner himself believe in his own guilt. The testimony of Miss Franchise shows that Page had occasion to fear that Lord Nordville would prosecute him for forgery and this gave him a motive for the killing. The prisoner at the bar is innocent as sure as there is the true murderer this moment in the presence of this court. Crier call Henry Page alias Darrell.

Crier. Henry Page take the stand. [*Darrell obeys.*]

Morton. Sirrah, you stand before a tribunal of your fellow-men. More than that, sirrah, you stand in the presence of Almighty God. Behold the prisoner at the bar—look him full in the face and tell me, is that the man who murdered Phillip Morton—Lord Nordville?

Darrell. I swear that—that he—he—

Morton. Stop—in Heaven's name do not further perjure yourself. Remember you have sworn to speak the truth, remember your words may add another murder to your crimes, remember that though you swear a million times that that man murdered Nordville, I, his brother, will never rest until I have hounded down the real murderer into a felon's grave. As I loved my brother, so am I determined that his death shall be avenged. God has given me a double vision, and I see behind your wretched mask. Here before this court I defy you to say that you are not his assassin.

Darrell. He persecuted me—he would have condemned me to a convict's cell and—and—

Morton. With murder in your heart you left his office determined to kill him.

Darrell. I—I—

Morton. Wretch, do not dare to utter a word of excuse. Like a fiend you followed him. You saw Macready, crazed by excitement and drink, stagger up against him and strike at him; then as quick as thought you sprang between them, and you stabbed—him—stabbed; I say *you* stabbed my brother!

Darrell. You guess rightly. I did murder him. I did try to fasten the guilt upon Macready. But bah! What are you going to do about it? I defy you. I defy the law.

[*Prosecuting Attorney commences to write rapidly.*]

Morton. Listen, your Honor, listen to that, hear him! A man who has been proven to have committed the most despicable crime known, has the audacity to come into this court room for the

extreme purpose of seeing an innocent man sentenced, and now stands here and defies the law. Ah, Macready spoke most truly—justice is dead.

Darrell. Ha, ha. It's a poor rule that won't work both ways. Good-day, Judge, good-day, gentlemen of the jury. I'm a murderer but you cannot try me twice for the same offense. Ta, ta. My regards, Mr. Morton. [*Starts to go.*]

Prosecuting Attorney. Officers, detain him. While we cannot again try him upon the same indictment, I have just prepared one upon which we can. Recollect your Honor he was formerly indicted for the murder of Lord Nordville. I now claim you have a right to commit him upon the separate and distinct charge of an attempt to murder Junius Macready, the prisoner, and also upon the separate count of perjury.

Judge. Write out his commitment.

Darrell. I—I protest. I am not guilty. I—

Judge. Away with him, away with him! And as for his villainous colleague, Paul Sharpe, he is an accomplice after the crime, and commit him also. [*Exit officers with Sharpe and Darrell.*] Now, gentlemen of the jury what say you, is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty?

Foreman of Jury. Not guilty. [*All, including Judge, congratulate Macready as the curtain descends.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*The Garden of Donald Morton. Rustic Seats Right and Left. Fence with Gateway Centre. Doorway Left.*

Enter Sutherland.

Sutherland. Fool that I am, why do I haunt this spot? Twenty times have I vowed never to come near here again and every time I have broken my resolution. And why? Why because I love these very pebbles I tread upon, for her foot has touched them; because when I look upon those rustic benches I imagine I see her seated upon them singing as merrily as the birds; because everything here seems to speak in eloquence of Zaidee, charming Zaidee. My heart throbs in ecstasy when I am near her, and when I leave I am miserable. I love her, oh, I adore

her, yet I dare not tell her ! She's an heiress, beautiful, loved and courted, the world before her is offering its rarest charms which seem all the brighter if she compares the present and the future with the darkness of her past. Though I am rich there should be something more than riches and a loving heart to give in return for such a treasure as Zaidee, darling Zaidee. [*Sits himself upon rustic seat.*] How industriously these ants are toiling. See that one staggering under the weight of a piece of bread crumb twice his size, which nevertheless, he's moving. He stops. He is at the entrance of his home. He peers down. "Is Mrs. Ant within?" he asks. "Yes." Now she comes out ready to help him with his burden. They all disappear, and no doubt the little ants below the ground are having quite a feast. Even these tiny creeping insects have their loves, their homes, their families, some one to share their burdens. How happy and contented they seem ? Not one of them off by himself moping and sighing over his troubles. Yet here am I, a giant compared with them, one movement of my foot would crush a thousand, and I am so miserable. If I could but see one spark of hope that my affection might some day be returned I'd bide my time and be the happiest of mortals, but bah, 'tis folly, Zaidee can never love me. Once she promised that if I would do all in my power to save poor Macready she'd give her consent to marry me. I kept my word and he was acquitted. What has been the result ? Zaidee says she will become my wife if I am cruel enough to compel her to keep her promise when she doesn't want to. No, no, a thousand times no ! She is free. I would rather die of a broken heart than drag an unwilling bride to the altar. If there is a hell on earth it is to be found in the abode of all those who marry for any other reason than love—unconquerable love. I will go—go where ? Anywhere. It don't make any difference, so that I'm away from here. Goodbye old rustic bench, goodbye ; hope, goodbye. [*Is about to leave sorrowfully. Enter Macready.*]

Macready. By Cæsar's ghost, it's Sutherland ! Why, old boy, how are you ? You look ready for a funeral.

Sutherland. I feel like one.

Macready. Hope nothing serious has happened. Have any of your family died ?

Sutherland. No.

Macready. Possibly a slight attack of spring fever.

Sutherland. No.

Macready. Then hold out your tongue. Let's feel your pulse. Yes, yes, 'tis 'tis, I'm sorry to say—

Sutherland. What?

Macready. The worse case of the worse disease in the whole category of medical science.

Sutherland. Do not trifle with me. I'm perfectly well.

Macready. But not here. [*Touching his heart*] *Sutherland*, my boy, you are in love. I know it by yond blush beneath your gills, I know it by your sighs of different sizes, I know it by your wrinkled, troubled brow, and I know it by the expression on your face which suggest "for-two-cents-I'd-go-drown-myself." Yes, *Sutherland*, you are in love.

Sutherland. But—

Macready. But hold on. I know more. I know who the fortunate young lady is. It's Zaidee, Miss Zaidee. And what's more, you are very foolish to sigh over her.

Sutherland. Why, why, in mercy speak! Do you mean she loves another, that my affection is hopeless, that she would spurn me, that she—

Macready. Hold on, for goodness sake hold on! I mean nothing of the kind. On the contrary, *Ernest Sutherland*, I would congratulate you. Your love is reciprocated.

Sutherland. Bah, how know you this?

Macready. Because she told me so.

Sutherland. You jest with me.

Macready. No, 'tis true. She visited me while in prison and told me that you had captured her heart.

Sutherland. But why does she treat me so cruelly?

Macready. Silly boy, do you not understand women yet? Scowl at them and they smile in return, smile at them and they call you soft and turn away disgusted, get on your knees before them and swear that you are willing to lay down your life for their sake and they will not believe you, treat them with indifference and they will do their utmost to bring you to their feet. Once win a woman through your own independence or through her jealousy and you have her forever. I tell you *Sutherland*, indifference before marriage pays.

Sutherland. And how about after marriage?

Macready. Ah, then it is different. If a man wants to break his poor wife's heart, if he wants to make his home miserable, if he wants to drive out every spark of joy and happiness from life, let

him be indifferent to his wife. We can afford to be independent to our sweethearts until they become our wives, but after that we should both be as necessary, the one to the other, as the sunshine is to vegetation.

Sutherland. And so you think if I assume an indifferent don't-care air towards Zaidee she'll finally give in?

Macready. I have not the slightest doubt of it. She loves you already, so the battle will be easily won. Ah, I see her coming now.

Sutherland. Yes, yes, there she comes, skipping along as merrily as a whippoorwill. God bless her little bright eyes! But, but I cannot see her now. I could not play my part. Oh, Macready, how can I ever even pretend to be indifferent to her?

Macready. I will make the task easy for you. Go now, and when you return all will be well; only seem to have so much business on hand that you cannot think of anything else. Understand?

Sutherland. Yes, yes, I will try.

Macready. Hurry along, then, she's almost here.

Sutherland. Good-day, and may Heaven grant that your ruse will at least secure one sweet smile from darling Zaidee. [*Exit Sutherland.*]

Macready. How unnecessarily miserable that fellow is. Sighing for an ace when he has a full hand. Crying of disappointed love, when Zaidee fairly adores him. Oh, well, everywhere we go we find two kinds of fools, the one sighing for that which they cannot get and the other sighing for that which they already have. Love is like tomato sauce, not good if too sweet and needing a little spice to make it savory; love is like money, but little thought of and quick to fly away if easily obtained, but awfully precious if 'tis hard earned; love is like diamonds because it is treasured above rubies; like Heaven, because of its sweet harmony; like Paradise, for 'tis an Eden without the serpent. In fact, love is like God, because it is the spirit which He breathed into us. Sweet task it is to reconcile two persons who are really fond the one of the other. [*Enter Zaidee.*]

Zaidee. Oh, Mr. Macready, I'm overjoyed to see you here. I hurried awfully fast when I caught a glimpse of you from yonder field where I've been gathering these lovely daisies. But—but I thought I saw some one with you, that is, ah—yes—that is—

Macready. You mean Mr. Sutherland.

Zaidee. Yes, yes, Mr. Sutherland—Erny. Where has he gone?

Macready. Well, the fact is, you see Miss Zaidee, Mr. Sutherland is overcrowded with business. He has really more than he can attend to, so he stopped up here to get me to tell you that he agreed with you precisely about your, your—excuse me—your marriage.

Zaidee. Mr. Macready. what do you mean?

Macready. Yes, yes, your marriage. He told me that he is quite glad that you refuse to name a wedding day. That his business has recently taken a boom and 'twill be impossible for him to even spare time to get married for at least a year, and that—

Zaidee. [*Impatiently.*] Well, well, what else did the nasty hateful thing say?

Macready. That, that all things considered, if it will be all the same to you, that is, he would like if—if—

Zaidee. Oh, go on, don't talk so slow!

Macready. He suggested that as long as he had become so attached to his business, maybe that the engagement too had better be put off indefinitely.

Zaidee. What! did the horrid, hateful thing tell you that? Oh, what will I do! Did he say he doesn't love me any more?

Macready. No, not exactly. But he thought that he could overcome his affection by devoting himself to business. At first he vowed by all the lover's oaths e'er heard of that he would off and kill himself, he swore that you were necessary to his existence, that without you life would be to him a hell, that you had spurned him and he wanted to die.

Zaidee. Yes, yes, bless his heart! He didn't 'speck I was only funning though, did he?

Macready. No, so I tried to persuade him out of his foolish notions. I told him you were a young, frivolous girl and not having seen anything of life yet, did not know your own heart, that it was very foolish for him to think that you would marry the first man who asked you.

Zaidee. I don't know if you ought to have said all that.

Macready. Then I told him to drive you out of his thoughts. To try to forget that any such person ever lived. He raved and swore that he never could, that you were the ideal of his soul, the empress of his heart—

Zaidee. Yes, yes, and what did you do then?

Macready. I drew his mind off on to business. I told him

that by devoting himself constantly to his profession he could soon forget you. He at last consented to try, and strange as you may think it, told me to day that he is succeeding splendidly. Ah Zaidee, you have a true friend in me, for through my kind fatherly assistance Ernest Sutherland will never trouble you again.

Zaidee. You're a crazy good for nothing meddler, that you are! Oh, how I hate you, nasty meany! I almost wish you'd been hung when you nearly had the rope around your neck.

Macready. Oh Zaidee, Zaidee, please don't remind me of that! I—

Zaidee. Forgive me, oh, please forgive me! I didn't mean it. But, but now 'fess you were awful mean to go and drive Erny away. Oh! Mr. Macready, you don't know how much I love him, I think about him night and day, and I only tried to fool him by making out I don't want to marry him just to get him to vow and vow and vow, and plead, and plead, and plead.

Macready. Then I certainly have made a mistake. What shall I do?

Zaidee. Why run and catch up with him. Tell him I love him more'n he loves me.

Macready. That will never do. Reconciliation on either side must be gradual. I will see that he returns here in a little while, but you had better keep up your indifference until you are convinced that you and he are drifting apart.

Zaidee. Helloh, who's all this a' coming down the road? Why, bless my eyes if tain't Czarwinski and all the folks!

Macready. You are right, but see, they are in holiday attire.

Zaidee. I'm awful glad they're coming 'cos it'll give me a chance to flirt with Oscar and so make Ernest jealous. Don't fail to have him here.

Macready. No fear of that. [*Enter Czarwinski, Miss Franchise, Oscar, auxiliary cranks, etc.*]

Czarwinski. Forward, march! Halt! We are here.

Franchise. So I perceive.

Oscar. [*To Zaidee.*]

Can it be possible? Can it be true?

That such a sweet garden belongs unto you?

Zaidee. No, not 'zactly, you see this is Uncle Donald's country seat, I am only sojourning here until my town mansion can be put into order.

Macready. I am delighted to meet you all again. If you'll

excuse me a few minutes I'll return with our mutual friend, Sutherland.

Miss Franchise. As spokesman for this party, I tell you, you can go sir, you can go. [*Exit Macready.*] Now Miss Zaidee Morton this delegation, of which I have the honor to be president, (Czarwinski, keep still) waits upon you in behalf of the down-trodden members of the female sex.

Zaidee. Oh, pshaw! I thought this was only a sociable visit.

Czarwinski. So it is, my child, so it is.

Franchise. Will you hush up! It was agreed that I should do the talking. Zaidee, where's your uncle? [*Enter Morton.*]

Zaidee. Here he is.

Franchise. Ah, Mr. Morton, you are an eloquent man. You are one whose words burn into the hearts of an audience like coals of fire. But sir, but sir, you are a man, and being a man, have your prejudices against our sex.

Morton. I assure you ma'am I have none.

Franchise. Oblige me by not interrupting. You should use your talents, sir, where they will do the most good. You find that at the present day one-half the human race is enslaved; you find that women are oppressed, and it is your duty, sir your duty, to join your voice with mine in the glorious battle cry of freedom.

Morton. Permit me a word, madam. I know that it is useless to argue with women, but as a lawyer, I would remind you of the fact that both in this country and in America women are better protected and more anxiously cared for than men. For instance, a married woman can give her promissory note, can contract debts and never pay them, can make her husband settle for her purchases or else avoid paying altogether, for she has only to hide behind the law and say to the tradesman she has robbed: "touch me if you dare, I'm a married woman and the law protects me." Again a single woman has advantages; if a man promises to marry her she can make him come up to time by a suit of breach of promise, but who ever heard of a jury giving damages where a man is the plaintiff in such case! Women can ride in the street cars and set down, a luxury some of us poor men have not known for years; they can keep their hats on at the theatres; they can control the average jury by a simple smile—in fact, women instead of being down-trodden have a thousand and one advan-

tages over men. I have no desire to argue the question with you, madam.

All together. Bravo! Bravo!

Franchise. I don't care—it's mean and cowardly, for you to say all these horrid things about us poor frail creatures. We—

Zaidee. Oh dry up and blow away! Come let's have a song.

[*Song or other diversity. Enter two officers.*]

1st Officer. Beg pardon, ladies and gentlemen, but we are officers of the law, in search of two felons who escaped from the old Bailey last night.

Franchise. Mercy sakes, will this lawing never end?

1st Officer. They were seen to come this way. Have you noticed any suspicious looking strangers?

2d Officer. One's a tallish looking fellow with * * coat and * * pants, the other is * * and has * *. They're a dangerous pair.

Morton. We have seen nothing of them. But tell me, what are their names?

1st Officer. Henry Darrell and Paul Sharpe.

Zaidee. [*Aside.*] That's just like Dad, he's 'scaped.

2d Officer. But we can't reckon much on their names, sir, they have so many aliases.

Morton. We will watch out for them. Good day, officers, if they come this way we'll do our best to detain them.

Officers. Thank you, sir, thank you. [*Exit.*]

Zaidee. I tells you what Dad's one slippery eel.

Morton. My child why do you persist in calling that villainous Darrell, "Dad?"

Zaidee. I don't know. I 'speck it's cos I'm used to it. I say uncle, I know that Dad—I mean Mr. Dar—I mean Darrell—'san awful bad man, I know he nearly had poor Mr. Macready hung, but nevertheless, when I think of all the days when he fed me, and fed me, and fed me, I kinder feel a little sorry for him.

Morton. But you told me that he ill treated you—that he beat you.

Zaidee. I know he did and awful hard too. I've bruises all over my back that will never go away which he and Mam gave me, but no matter, it seems to me that if a little child would live with the old Devil himself for years and years and years, always calling him Dad, Dad, Dad, and believing that he really was Dad, that child would grow fond of him, though he fed it upon molten lead. Tho' we may get used to people and not love them, still we feel

towards them a something that makes us hate to see them suffer. I hope Dad won't be caught.

Morton. Hush my child, you should not speak so. He is a desperate criminal, and if it is my good fortune to be able to stop his flight, I certainly will turn him over to the law. He murdered my brother and I am determined that he shall be punished for his crime. Ah, here's Mr. Macready and Mr. Sutherland. I will leave you. [*Exit Morton. Enter M. and S.*]

Sutherland. Ah, Miss Franchise, I am charmed, Czarwinski how are you? Oscar, glad to see you, [*etc.*,] and Zaidee, too, I—

Zaidee. Since I am the last you notice p'raps you had better call me Miss Zaidee, Mr. Sutherland.

Sutherland. Excuse me, ah then, Miss Zaidee. [*Aside to Zaidee.*] I suppose Macready has told you of my resolution?

Zaidee. Yes he has, and I am very glad to see that you are gradually getting a little sense.

Sutherland. Thank you, Miss. I am sorry I cannot return the compliment.

Zaidee, [*Aside to Oscar.*] Ah Oscar, dear, you were speaking of taking me out boating on the lake, I shall certainly be delighted.

Oscar. But I said nothing about—

Zaidee [*Aside to Oscar.*] Be quiet, fool, of course you did. [*Aloud.*] I am sure that we will have a snoptious time.

Oscar. 'Twill be charming I'm sure.

Zaidee. Do you remember when we were boys, Osc? Oh, didn't we have a jolly time when Dad and Mam would go out and we'd be all alone. Oh, cracky—

Oscar. Oh those halcyon days, ne'er will I forget,
Those days of long ago;
When you and I would fuss and fret,
And then make up you know.

Zaidee. Yes, my! but it was snice. Maybe maybe, we can repeat those scenes and live over the past. If I only could! Do you know Oscar, I'd give up all these riches, all these fashions and furbeloes, everthing and everybody, simply to live once more that sweet existence, when you and I were ever together.

Oscar. Oh, this rapture, oh, this bliss,
Reminds me of your charming kiss.

Zaidee. Yes, yes, that day in the parlor. Oh my! wasn't it scrumptuous though! Never mind Oscar, you needn't sigh, you know what the good old hymn says.

Oscar. No.

Zaidee. "Still there's more to follow."

Sutherland. [*Aside to Macready.*] This is too much, it will break my heart. The idea of that fool—

Macready. [*Aside to Sutherland.*] Keep your patience my boy, keep your patience. Helloh! here comes Mrs. Darrell. Ah, happy thought. You knew her before her marriage, gently remind her of the fact, and do it with a deep friendly interest.

Sutherland. I understand. [*Enter Mrs. Darrell.*] Mrs. Darrell we are charmed to see you. I am so glad you came, for we wish to assure you that we do not connect you in the slightest with the rascality of your husband.

Mrs. D. Ah, thank you, Mr. Sutherland.

Franchise. I agree with him, and it was at my earnest request that you were invited thither.

Mrs. D. You are too kind. And what says my little one, *Zaidee*?

Zaidee. I ain't so glad, for in my 'pinion you are just as bad as Dad. I hate you.

Sutherland. Don't mind her, ma'am. From the experience you have had with her you know that she is at times very irritable.

Zaidee. I didn't think you'd be the first one to find fault with me. I—I—

Sutherland. My child don't you see that I desire to to converse with this lady? Besides, Mr. Oscar is waiting.

Zaidee. Oh yes, so he is. But Ernest Sutherland, don't you dare to say anything about me.

Sutherland. Humph! there's no danger, you are foreign to my thoughts just now. Ah, dear Mrs. Darrell, speaking of your unfortunate marriage reminds me of those happy days when I was a frequent visitor at your old home.

Mrs. D. Yes, that was before I knew Darrell.

Sutherland. True, and I think it was certainly the happiest period in my life. Do you remember any of the old songs you used to sing?

Zaidee. No she don't remember any of the old song she used to sing. She never had any more voice than a crocus. The old

cat! Oh Erny, how could you—I mean Oscar—come along Oscar, we will leave them. [*Exit Zaidee and Oscar.*]

Mrs. D. The child seems to be in a bad humor. Alas! poor Zaidee, she never had a good disposition.

Sutherland. Madam, hush up! I will allow no one to say anything against Zaidee. Her temper is as sweet as a May morning, although your cruel treatment was enough to kill the poor child. If you say another word against her I will forget madam, that you are a woman and will treat you as I would a man. [*Exit Sutherland.*]

Mrs. D. This is strange conduct indeed. One moment he's all smiles and so sweet that he'd melt in your mouth, and the next he's ready to snap your head off. I can't understand.

Franchise. That's because he's a man. All men are just like him. An inconsistent, inconsiderate, incompatible, incongruous and incomprehensible set. I tell you we mustn't pay any more attention to them than if they were—What's that, dear Mr. Czarwinski, did you speak?

Czarwinski. No, madam.

Franchise. Ah, beg pardon, I thought you did. If there's anything I can do for you, don't hesitate to mention it. Ah, as I was saying Mrs. Darrell, men should be treated with silent contempt. They treat us as though we were nothing—we should act towards them as though they were less.

Mrs. D. I'm too mortified for anything—let's go inside.

Franchise. Agreed. [*Exit Mrs. Darrell and Franchise.*]

Czarwinski. Night's coming on and Darrell may make good his escape. Who would have thought that in so short a time a man of his standing would become a fleeing felon, but such is his reward. What a cloak fanaticism throws around villainy. I thought that man a patriot; I find him a murderous scoundrel, caring nothing for his country—his only aim being to get money by fair means or foul. I have made up my mind to renounce Nihilism and become a law-abiding citizen, for it makes but little difference to the people themselves whether they be governed by a Czar or a President. Any government is better than anarchy. [*Enter Zaidee.*]

Zaidee. Ah, I say, Mr. Czarwindowsty (I can never get your name right) have you seen Mr. Sutherland?

Czarwinski. I thought he went into the house with you.

Zaidee. No, I've looked in every crook and corner for him.

He's not there. Now, you're a friend of mine, Czarsky, so you wouldn't mind slipping over towards Greenwich to look for him him—it's only eleven miles.

Czarwinski. But I might miss him.

Zaidee. That's so, but go. I must see him. I want to—I want to—. Oh can't you understand? Why do you hesitate? Oh, please go find him!

Czarwinski. Why not wait till to-morrow?

Zaidee. Wait till to-morrow, when I feel like crying my very eyes out! No, no, no, I cannot wait. I must see him to-night. It's important, and—and you know what the man in the book says, "To-morrow never comes." See it's now nearly dark, but he can't be far away—oh, pity me and go!

Czarwinski. I will try to find him. [*Exit.*]

Zaidee. And may Heaven bless you! What a silly girl I am! But I guess all other girls are just like me. We think when we've got a fellow on a string we can turn him down just to suit our own convenience, and then when we want him ag'in all we've got to do is pull the string and yank him back. I thank goodness Erny is not one of the yankable kind. Poor fellow, I did treat him awfully, letting that idiot Oscar get sweet on me right afore him. If he only returns I'll make it all right with him. Yes siree, I'll make it solid if I have to marry him before immediately to get even with him. I wonder if he does care anything for that cross-eyed-bow-legged package of skin-and-bones, Mammy Darrell! I could tear her eyes out for looking so sickening at him. Helloh! here comes somebody. I'll bet it's Erny. Someone's with him. 'Speck it's Czarsky. What're they creeping along so for? Maybe to 'surprise me. I'll hide behind here and scare 'em. [*Stands back.*]

[*Enter Darrell and Sharpe.*]

Darrell. My God is there no rest! I tell you Sharpe, it's no use trying to escape. The sooner we give ourselves up the better. Imprisonment—even death—is preferable to this continual hiding and dodging from the law; afraid to ask for work, afraid to beg even for a cup of water. What will we do?

Sharpe. Blest if I know. I was a fool to join you in your jail-breaking scheme. I'm sure we were more comfortable in our snug prison cells than here tramping about the country afraid of our own shadows.

Darrell. But I thought we could escape to America.

Sharpe. Escape and no money! Bah, 'twas folly. I tell you

Darrell, if a man has money he can do anything, accomplish anything, but without it he is without everything. Even in the prison from which we have just escaped, its influence is felt. The other morning I heard the Turnkey say to the Warden "There's another prisoner waiting below." "Show him to one of the lower cells," answered the warden. You see that's where they keep common prisoners like us. "But" said the Turnkey, "The prisoner was a bank cashier and is accused of embezzling £50,000." "Ah," answered the Warden, "In that case give him a suite of rooms in the second story front and order his meals from a restaurant."

Darrell. And you heard that! 'Tis true, money then even if it cannot unlock prison doors makes the prison itself more comfortable. Money—who can measure its power? 'Tis the key to our consciences, for, for its sake men will stoop to any crime; 'tis the enemy of justice, for by its power 'tis easy to hoodwink the law; 'tis a cruel master for he who worships at its shrine sacrifices without begrudging, honor, truth and life; 'tis a frivolous friend that flitteth away when most we need it; ah, money is omnipotent!

Sharpe. Moralizing is all very well in its way, but just now we need something a little more satisfying. The cops may bounce upon us at any moment; we must keep low. Darrell, we are almost starving, for we are without the filthy—I mean money, the king you were talking about, what say you to crack this crib?

Darrell. What, rob—rob—you ask me to rob?

Sharpe. Yes, why not. It's either that, starvation or prison. Quick let us to work.

Darrell. No, stop. I have forged, I have murdered, and there is no crime of which I am innocent; but I tell you now, that the days of Henry Page the thief, the murderer, are over: Henceforth I intend to be honest.

Sharpe. Ha, ha! You're rather late in the day commencing with your Sunday School resolution. The idea of a murderer, a fleeing assassin, talking of honesty and reformation. Bah! It is ridiculous.

Darrell. Nevertheless I intend to try and—

Sharpe. Starve. Henry Darrell you're a fool. Don't you know that a man who has committed a crime is regarded by the world as one who has a loathsome disease? They do not think of crime as curable, and no matter how earnestly a man who has once

offended may afterwards strive to live honestly and uprightly the world will never receive him again.

Darrell. And in that it is most just.

Sharpe. True enough, but what's the use reforming? We are hounded for crime, we must live by crime. Honest people will spurn us; we are accursed; we must make the best of the circumstances; so come—

Darrell. I will not.

Sharpe. Then I'll do the job alone. [*Exit Sharpe.*]

Darrell. Let him go, he will be caught; and if he is not—if he is not! he shall not escape from here with his plunder. Not if I can help it.

Zaidee. [*Advancing.*] Or "Me-too," Dad.

Darrell. What, Zaidee—his child—you here? No, no, 'tis some spirit. Oh, have mercy, have mercy!

Zaidee. I'm none o' your white-washed ghosts, it's me, real rightly me. An' what's more Dad, I heard all you were saying to that rascal of a cove.

Darrell. You did, eh—you did? And will give us up?

Zaidee. No, no, 'cos Dad, 'cos those words you just spoke were the first honest ones I ever heard you say. I believe they come right from your heart, and I'm going to give you a chance.

Darrell. What—you, you the child I wronged, abused, ill-treated! It cannot be that you are in earnest.

Zaidee. Yes I am Dad, yes I am. You did lick me rather oftener than I thought there was any necessity for, but I forgive you. I haven't the slightest hard-feeling ag'in, you 'cepting your treatment of Mr. Macready.

Darrell. But—

Zaidee. There's no buts about it. In course, I feel hard ag'in' you for poor father's sake, but then I never knew him. You were all the Dad I ever knew. If I get you out of this scrape you must make me a solemn promise.

Darrell. Yes, yes, I'll promise anything.

Zaidee. No, no, I don't want that kind. If you can't promise me from the bottom of your heart and of your own free will, please don't promise at all.

Darrell. Speak on, my child, name your condition.

Zaidee. Get down on your knees. Look up yonder at those bright stars shining in the heavens: God's up there and I want Him to witness what we're saying.

Darrell. Yes, but I'm too guilty—too guilty.

Zaidee. Hush—no you're not! No one is but Sharpe, he's too far gone for anything. Now solemnly swear that you will try your best to live a better life to atone for your past crimes.

Darrell. I do, I do, as Heaven is my witness.

Zaidee. Then I will help you.

Sutherland. [*Outside in a quarrelsome tone*] I am determined to have satisfaction. How dare you speak to her?

Oscar. My dear, sir, be calm, don't get excited. You know she is an old playmate. She—

Sutherland. I'll have you understand that * * * [*Etc.*]

Zaidee. Hist! that's Erny and Oscar, they may come this way. Go call Sharpe. [*Darrell obeys. Enter Sharpe.*] They must not see you now. There, there, conceal yourselves, but don't go far away. Remember, you have my promise. I will help you both to escape to America. There, hide! When I give a low whistle like that [*whistles*] come forward.

Darrell. We will trust you. [*Exit D. and S.*]

Zaidee. Here's a lark! Now, how to work it. [*Enter Sutherland and Oscar.*]

Oscar. I apologize. I apologize. I—

Sutherland. Bother your apologies, there's no satisfaction in them. Apologies were invented for cowards.

Oscar. Then you are determined to fight.

Sutherland. I am determined to have satisfaction.

Oscar. Then excuse me if I become unpoetical in my excitement. Dang my eyes, you shall have it! [*Rolling up his sleeves.*] You will be sorry for this.

Sutherland. Not until I have punished you. There take that.

Oscar. And that, and that.

Zaidee. [*Separating them.*] Gentlemen, gentlemen! I am shocked. This is like school boys or ruffians.

Oscar. He made me fight. I didn't want to. I—

Sutherland. He had no business to talk as he did to you. I'll be revenged or—

Zaidee. What have you to do with it, anyway? Has not our engagement been indefinitely postponed?

Sutherland. Yes. All on account of him.

Zaidee. No. All on account of your own request.

Sutherland. What, my request? Oh, my darling, how could you imagine such a thing?

Zaidee. Then you did not say those awful things to Mr. Macready?

Sutherland. I told him you were the sweetest being that ever lived and that you were killing me because you would not marry me.

Zaidee. Ah! I see through it all. And you were only pretending to care more for your business than for me?

Sutherland. Yes, yes; and you'll forgive me?

Zaidee. With all my heart. Oh, Erny, I love you more than all the rest of the world put together and will gladly become your little wife.

Oscar. That settles it. [*Humming.*]

"The marriage bells were ringing,
What a joyous peal have they, etc."

Zaidee. Then you really love me?

Sutherland. Need you ask me that when—

Zaidee. I'll trust you for the rest. Will you do something for me, to prove your love?

Sutherland. Ask anything in the world. I would willingly lay down my life for you, darling.

Zaidee. And you too, Oscar?

Oscar. Aye, verily! No boon is too great to ask of me.

Zaidee. I'm going to 'sprise you both. First, I want you to loan me some money.

Sutherland. What? When? Money?

Zaidee. Yes, money. When? Now. Don't ask any questions, but pan out.

Sutherland. All that I have is yours. I have just drawn £500 from bank. How much do you need of it? Will a £10 do?

Zaidee. No, you penurious youngster, I want it all.

Sutherland. There certainly is some mystery. But never-mind, there fair highwayman, take all I have. [*Hands her notes.*]

Zaidee. And Oscar, how much have you?

Oscar. I—I—the fact is, I've just made a deposit in the bank, I have only a two-shilling piece left.

Zaidee. Then give me that. Gentlemen, I will repay this in the morning, but now I am going to ask you for something I cannot so easily return, but which I will try to duplicate.

Oscar and Sutherland together. What do you mean?

Zaidee. Like Jack Sheppard of old, I apologize before I rob you. Gentlemen, I demand your clothes.

Sutherland. What! Pshaw! This is a joke.

Zaidee. No, I am in dead earnest. Listen. Two poor creatures are hunted down by officers of the law; they are ragged, hungry, penniless and friendless; they came here fleeing for safety; I have seen them—

Sutherland. What, you—you have seen Darrell, Darrel the murderer?

Zaidee. Yes, I have seen Darrell. Call him what you please, to me he is a reformed man.

Sutherland. Only let me get near him once, I'll tear him limb from limb.

Zaidee. No you won't.

Sutherland. Why? The black-hearted wretch!

Zaidee. Because you love me. I have promised to aid him escape and I will keep my word. He has sworn to lead a better life and I believe him.

Sutherland. Bah!

Zaidee. Then sir, you who a moment ago professed to love me so dearly now will not do this much for me. There take your old money, I'll have none of it.

Sutherland. Forgive me *Zaidee*, I—I will do just as you ask.

Oscar. And I too, though it's awfully unpoetical. I hope you won't make us undress here, that is—

Zaidee. Oh, no. [*Whistles signal.*] Fear not for modesty's sake. Ah, here're the men. [*Enter D. and S.*] I s'pose, Dad, you've heard all we've said. Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Wilde will retire with you to your hiding place, there you can all change clothing, after which please return and I will further assist you.

Darrell. What can I say to show my gratitude?

Zaidee. Nothing, but go and do as I bid you. [*Exit D. and S. S. and O.*] So much for so much. This is a daisy racket. Jumping beeswax! They just laid low in time: here comes the perlice. [*Enter 1st and 2d Officers.*]

1st Officer. I tell you I saw two men enter here. [*Noticing Zaidee.*] Ah, young miss, no doubt you are waiting for some fair gallant.

Zaidee. Mind your business, sir, it's nothing to you for whom I am waiting.

1st Officer. Beg your pardon. No offense, Miss, no offense

We were here a few minutes ago searching for escaped prisoners. We thought we saw two men enter this garden.

Zaidee. You are right, but they were Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Wilde, friends of the family. So, get! bounce! the quicker the better.

2d. Officer. May I ask if anyone else recently passed this way? I notice several fresh footprints leading into the garden—one being made by a heelless shoe—may we search the premises?

Zaidee. No, no, go way, you frighten me.

2d. Officer. You have more reason to be alarmed at being here alone. Be kind enough to call the gentleman of the house.

Zaidee. I will do nothing of the kind. If you're searching for a couple of tramps you're right, two did pass here less than ten minutes ago. They seemed to be in too much of a hurry even to ask for something to eat.

1st Officer. Yes, yes, they're the very men we're after.

2d. Officer. Did one have a * * *

Zaidee. Oh, I didn't 'zamine him. If you hurry up and follow that road mighty fast you'll catch 'em. [*Pointing left.*]

1st Officer. But that's the way we came.

Zaidee. Oh, I made a mistake, they ran down that way. [*Pointing right.*]

2d. Officer. We'll soon have them. [*Exit Officers.*]

Zaidee. Run on you fools, the faster you run the farther you'll get. * * * Hist there, are you ready?

Sutherland. [*Outside.*] All excepting Oscar.

Oscar. I'm in an awful plight, these pants are very tight, I can't come out to-night.

Sutherland. By jeminy, you are right.!

Oscar. Pshaw! I've busted them quite.

Zaidee. I hope that it is slight. But come along, there's not a moment to lose. [*Enter Sutherland in Sharpe's clothes, Oscar in Darrell's, Darrell in Oscar's, and Sharpe in Sutherland's.*]

Oscar. Behold the Hungarian Quartette!

Sutherland. Let us proceed to warble. Holy Moses! The officers are returning.

Zaidee. So they are. Here, quick! Oscar, Ernest, hide again. Dad, you and Sharpe must personate Oscar and Ernest. [*Sutherland and Oscar conceal themselves.*] Take this money, Dad. [*Handing it to Darrell.*] You will need it. 'Tis enough

to pay for both your passages to the United States, where you can assume a new name and, I sincerely trust, live a new life.

Darrell. Oh, how can I thank you?

Sharpe. Miss Zaidee I always thought my heart a stone but your goodness has melted it. I too, will lead a better life.

Zaidee. Your promises amply repay me. I have given you liberty, and I only ask in return that some day I may have proven to me that I have not done wrong in aiding your escape.

Darrell. You shall not be disappointed. Oh, my child—

Zaidee. Hush, they come. Remember you are Oscar, the poet, and you are Sutherland. [*Enter Officers.*]

2d Officer. We were misled; there's not a trace of foot-prints.

Zaidee. Maybe they walked on their ears.

1st Officer. [*Turning to D. and S.*] Are you the gentlemen who entered here five minutes ago.

Darrell. We are.

1st Officer. Did you notice any suspicious looking—

Darrell. We noticed nothing. Stand aside, we must hurry along. Miss Zaidee, I bid you adieu.

Sharpe. And I too. Take my advice, and tell these supposed officers to make themselves scarce. They may be impostors.

Zaidee. Oh, I'll 'tend to them. Goodbye. [*Exit D. and S.*]
[*Turning to Officers.*] We are not accustomed to having officers of the law about here. Do you desire to see Mr. Morton?

1st Officer. Oh no—that is, ah, yes.

2d Officer. Please tell him to step here one moment.

Zaidee. I will call the whole household. [*Exit Zaidee.*]

2d Officer. Bill, there's something in the wind. Those fellows are hiding here somewhere, for we cannot trace that peculiar footprint a step further.

1st Officer. You're right man, you're right. [*Enter Morton, Macready, Mrs. D., Zaidee, Franchise, Cranks, etc.*]

Morton. What's the matter, what's the matter?

Zaidee. Please, Uncle, these policemen say the place is full of buglers and robbers.

Franchise. Oh, mercy me, what will I do! I'm so afraid of a man. We poor women—

1st Officer. Excuse me, mum, but we'll have to commence to search at once.

Franchise. Search? Search? Search me? What?

2d Officer. No, not you, but the premises.

Macready. One moment. Officers you are looking for Henry Darrell?

1st and 2d Officers together. Yes, sir, we are.

Macready. Then I will assist you. [*Aside.*] And if I find him I will save the law the trouble of punishing him. [*Aloud.*] Come! Desire for vengeance will give me double sight. Come, follow me [*Rushes off. Exit officers.*]

Franchise. Oh, Mr. Morton, Mr. Morton, catch me or I faint.

Morton. Bear up, madam, there's no danger.

Franchise. I'm so nervous. All men are monsters, and that man Darrell is the monster of monsters. He has a special spite against me and I—

Zaidee. Dry up! you're putting all this on. You're a baby, so you are. [*Enter Macready dragging Oscar in Darrell's clothes, all torn, etc., followed by officers with Sutherland; prisoners protesting.*]

Macready. I will show you no mercy. Be silent! Wretch, your life is mine! [*Shaking him.*] I have sworn to be avenged and will keep my word. To cheat the gallows is not robbery.

Morton. It is murder.

Macready. Murder! Do you call it murder for me to choke this miserable, contemptible scoundrel, this wretched assassin who tried to swear away my life? If this is murder, what then is justice?

Oscar. [*Trying to speak.*] I—I ain't. I tell you—

Macready. Another word and I brain you. Heaven alone knows how I have suffered through the persecutions of this foul ruffian. He murdered my friend and then worked upon my imagination until he made me suffer all the bitter pangs of guilt. Ah, vengeance is sweet, so sweet!

Sutherland. There is a mistake, we are not—

1st Officer. It's no use for you trying to play that kind o' a game off on us, we're too old in the business. Come mate, on with the clippers. [*Handcuffs Sutherland, 2d Officer steps forward to do the same to Oscar.*]

Macready. Stand back, sir! I claim this prisoner! [*Shaking him.*]

2d Officer. But sir, we are of the law, sir—the law. The majesty of the law—

Macready. Majesty, indeed! I care nothing for it. I am willing to

lay down my life to wreak my vengeance upon this wretched cur. [*Shaking him.*] Ha, ha, the majesty of the law! Tell me rather of the majesty of hell, for law is an iron-handed monster, whose majesty is its strength, not its inchoate wisdom. Look ye upon me! See, my hair is white—'tis not because of age, but from the persecution of this contemptible scoundrel,—my poor brain is shattered, my constitution wrecked, my hopes destroyed—think you law will give me justice? No, no; hanging is too good for a fiend incarnate like this. Come! [*Dragging Oscar.*] I will give you a taste of a more bitter death. The first man who tries to stop me, dies.

Zaidee. Hold, Mr. Macready! Stop! At least allow him first to pray.

Macready. I give him thirty seconds to make his peace with Him Whom he has robbed for forty years. Pray on, if you can.

Oscar. Oh, Lord, [*Aside.*] I never prayed before. [*Aloud.*] Oh, Lord, Thou knowest my name is Oscar, and if I—

Macready. Oscar! What? Oscar!

Zaidee. Yes, look good at him. See, 'tis our own Oscar.

Macready. 'Tis true, 'tis true, and I am cheated of my vengeance.

Morton. Leave that to Him who judgeth the sins of the whole world.

Zaidee. [*Turning to Sutherland.*] And this poor miserable looking object is Mr. Sutherland, my much-abused Erny. Mr. Officer be kind enough to remove these uncomfortable bracelets.

1st Officer. What is the meaning of all this?

Zaidee. It means simply that jail-birds have strong, tireless wings, and that they have flown.

2d Officer. Ah, I see through the whole scheme. Those two fellows whom this young lady panned off to us as her friends are really our birdies.

Zaidee. 'Zactly. So goodbye.

1st Officer. But you aided in the escape, and—

2d Officer. Oh, pshaw! We are losing time. Remember the reward! Come! [*Exit Officers.*]

Zaidee. [*Aside.*] Oh, jolly! They've gone the wrong way. [*Macready starts to follow officers.*] Stop please, for my sake stop. If you care just a little bit for me, Mr. Macready, spare that man. He murdered my own father, but—but, if I can forgive him

you certainly ought. He will live a better life; oh, please don't go! Remember I used to call him Dad.

Macready. For your sake, child, I will let the law take its course, but I'll never forgive him.

Zaidee. Come folks, let's think no more of those horrid men. I've a piece of news for you all! I know Uncle's willing, so with his consent I introduce to you my future husband, Mr. Ernest Sutherland, S. K., Esquire, etc., etc. He ain't dressed very slick, but I love him more'n if he had the best clothes in the world on and I knew that through him bad old Dad was sent to prison.

Macready. Zaidee is right, Zaidee is right! I will try to forget the past and live on in the hope that there'll never be another CRANKS' RETREAT.

CURTAIN.

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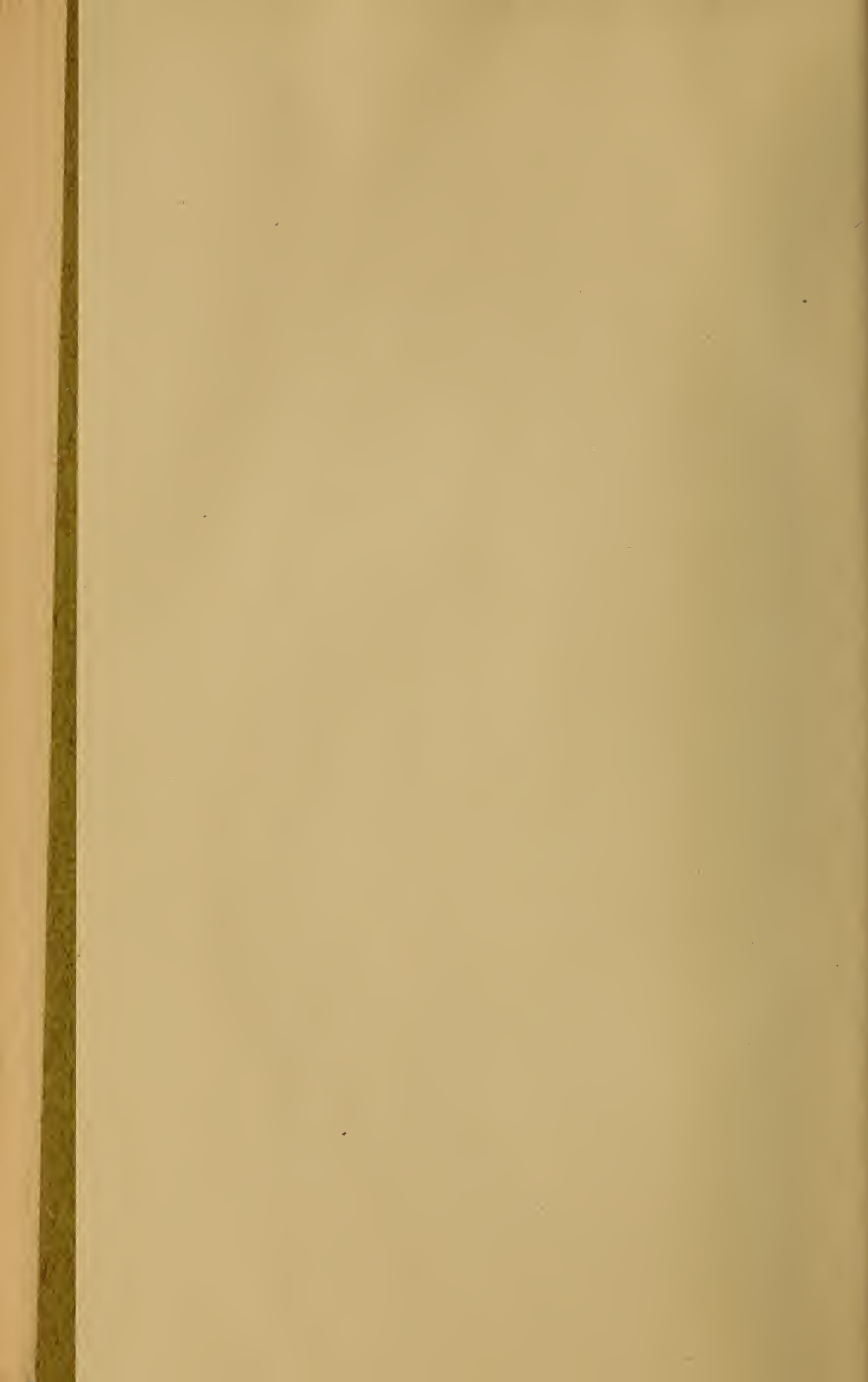
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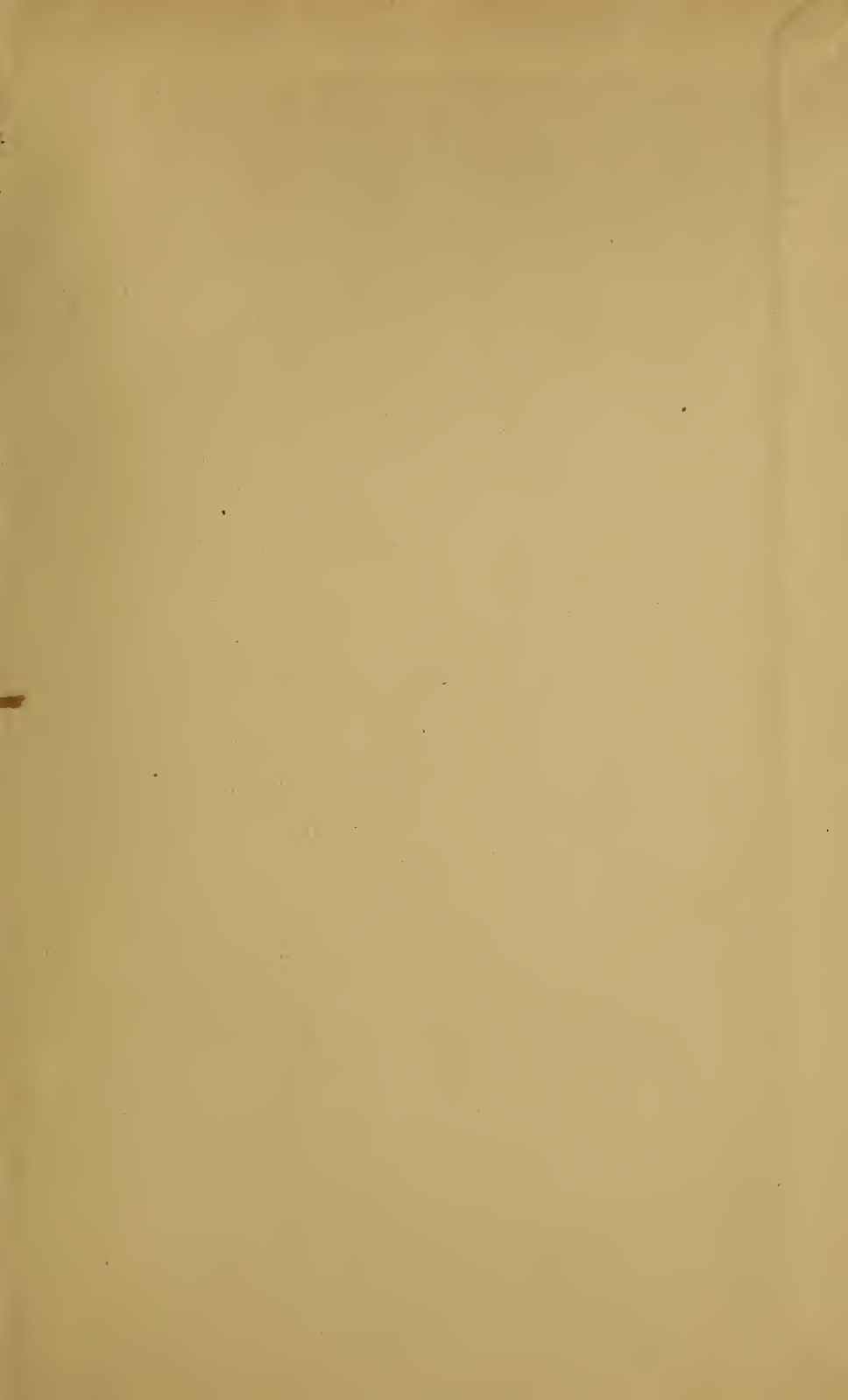
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